# Gov't troops, Misuari group clash; 13 dead

STORY ON PAGE A2

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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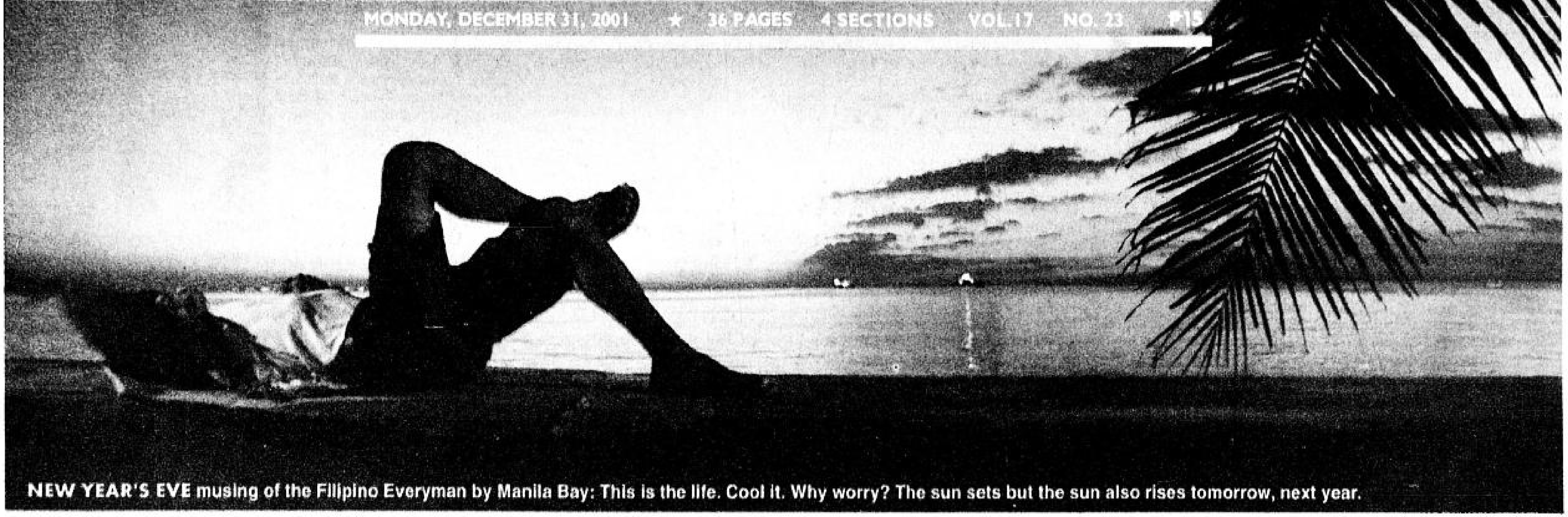
LESS INTRIGUE, HAPPINESS, EVERLASTING LOVE AT ISANG ABOGADO ANG WISH KO SA FAMILY KO!
EG

## GMA's wish list

By Desiree Caluza and Robert Abaño
*PDI N. Luzon Bureau*

BAGUIO CITY—She's the most powerful person in the land. She can have anything at her bidding. But the scope of

GMA'S/ A4



**NEW YEAR'S EVE** musing of the Filipino Everyman by Manila Bay: This is the life. Cool it. Why worry? The sun sets but the sun also rises tomorrow, next year.

VAL HANDUMON

# Isafp grills ex-Lacson men

## Explosives seized from 9 members of elite Navy commando group

By Carlito Pablo and Martin P. Marfil

**THE MILITARY has seized 100 blocks of C-4 plastic explosives from nine members of a commando group formerly under Sen. Panfilo Lacson when he was chief of the Philippine National Police and the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF).**

The seizure of the explosives led to the arrest on Dec. 28 of Lt. Junior Grade Don Anthony Miraflor and eight of his men from the now disbanded Special Reaction Unit (SRU) of the Navy's elite Special Warfare Group (SWAG), which was previously attached to the PAOCTF.

Miraflor, a member of Class 1991 of the Philippine Military Academy, and his men are undergoing interrogation at the Marine headquarters in Fort Bonifacio, Makati.

"This cache of explosives can flatten all major military service headquarters in Metro Manila, including the AFP-GHQ (Armed Forces of the Philippines General Headquarters) and DND (Department of National Defense) building, plus five other buildings in Makati," said a source from the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp).

Easy to conceal because it can be molded like putty, C-4 is the most powerful explosive in the arsenals of the military and the police. "It is more powerful than TNT," the source said of C-4, one of the favorite weapons of terrorists worldwide.

He said military investigators

ISAFP/ A4

## 'Sona' boys going way of Mang Pandoy

By Christian V. Esguerra

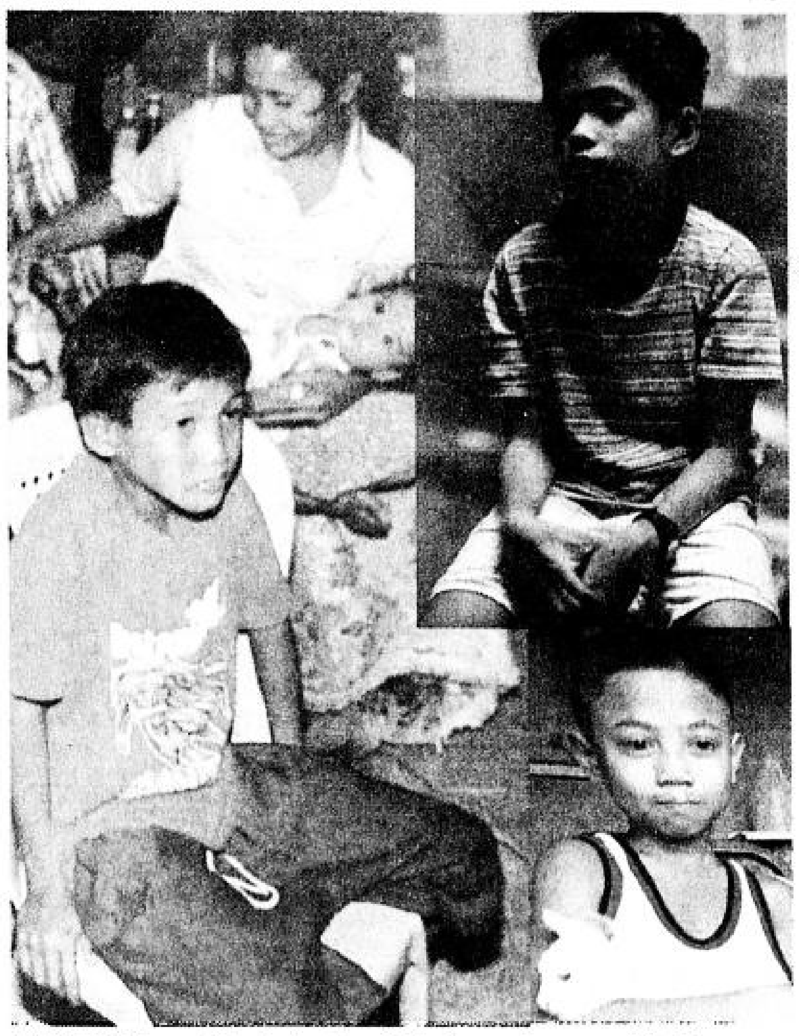
FROM bad to worse.

This was how the three boys from Payatas and their families assessed what has become of their lives since President Macapagal-Arroyo presented them during her State of the Nation Address (Sona) five months ago.

The "Sona" boys—Jomer Pabalan, 10, Jayson Vann Banogan, 11, and Erwin Dolera, 9—feel their condition has turned from bad to worse after they were forced into the limelight as the newest faces of poverty the Macapagal administration had vowed to wipe out.

They are also hard-pressed to deliver on the Macapagal promise. They fear they might end up becoming another Mang Pandoy, the poor old man who represented the poverty-alleviation program of the Ramos administration. Mang Pandoy has stayed poorer than poor.

SONA/ A12



**LIMELIGHT** burns (clockwise, from left) Jomer, Jayson and Erwin.

JIM PUNZALAN/EDWIN BACASMAS

CHECK IT OUT

## Has GMA kept her (Sona) promises?

By PDI Research

YEAR-ENDER

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo made 35 promises to the Filipino people when she delivered her first State of the Nation Address (Sona) on July 23, 2001. Some of these promises are due next year and others in 2004 and 2005.

But the deadline of seven of the promises falls due today, the last day of 2001.

Thanks in part to the Internet, monitoring how many of these promises were broken and how many fulfilled was easy.

The government's official website (http://www.gov.ph) details Ms Macapagal's promises with the corresponding deadlines, updates and the implementing agencies involved.

Based on the information found in the website, the Macapagal administration is generally on target. The PDI Research, however, also went directly to the implementing agencies (those with a 2001 deadline) and the people themselves who were to benefit from the President's promised projects. Below are the seven promises. You be the judge of the President's performance so far.

The President promised to deploy 1,000 rolling stores where rice would be sold at P14 per kilo instead of P18 by December 2001.

Past presidents introduced rolling stores also known as mobile stores. These stores cater to the low-income population. The stores major products are rice and other basic commodities like noodles, sardines, coffee and sugar.

As of Dec. 26 this year, the total rolling stores deployed across the country numbered 1,237 according to the data furnished by the National Food

HAS/ A12

# Peace and order Gloria's priority in 2002

IMPROVING the perception of peace and order in the country is the government's main objective in 2002, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said.

"Our number one challenge next year is the perception of peace and order," she said on national television.

"Everybody is saying our macroeconomic policy is very good, we should just take care of perceptions on peace and order," she said.

Topping the list of the President's concerns is the Abu Sayyaf bandit group, which is still holding in Basilan the two American missionaries who were among the 20 hostages seized from a Palawan resort on May 27.

She also cited "urban kidnappings" that prey on wealthy Chinese-Filipinos.

Ms Macapagal noted that the Philippine National Police was sometimes seen as an "obstacle" to solving this problem apparently because some of its members were not trusted by relatives of kidnap victims, who would rather pay ransom than cooperate with the police.

Without directly referring to an existing threat of destabilization, the President said the Armed Forces of the Philippines was always on the alert against certain quarters in the military who may be planning for an "adventure." *(See banner story.)*

Ms Macapagal said she was

PEACE/ A4

## Wounded deer sold for ₱10,000; too late the heroics

By Anselmo Roque and Ben Moses Ebreo
*PDI Central Luzon Desk*

CARRANGLAN, Nueva Ecija—By only a few hours, a team sent by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources missed the chance to save a wounded deer found by a group of INQUIRER mountaineers here last week.

The young deer, it turned out, was bought on Friday morning for P10,000 by a male motorist at the national highway in Sitio Dalton, Barangay Capintalan here.

The male endangered deer had a wound in its

WOUNDED/ A4

## Family ties triumph over fear of flying

By Jennie L. Ilustre
*Washington Correspondent*

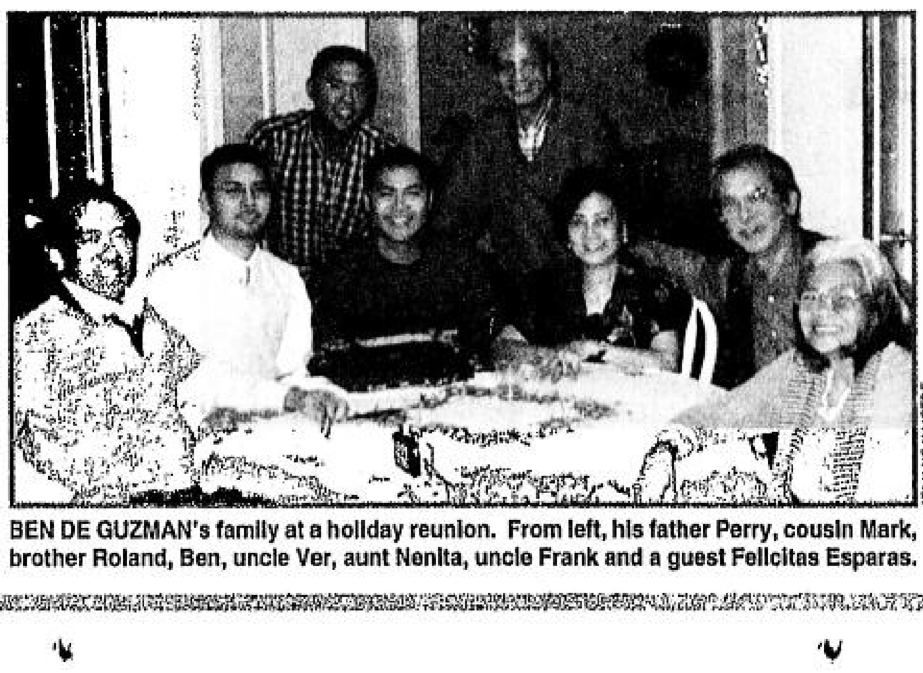
WASHINGTON—In the end, the desire to be with one's family during the Christmas season overpowered the fear of flying for most US-based Filipinos.

According to Alpha Travel owner Carl Abella, there was a sudden rush to travel to the Philippines and even around the United States in December, as people decided to be with their families for the holidays, despite the travel scare brought about by the Sept. 11 attacks.

Abella's company sold approximately 500 tickets, at the peak season price of $1,200 apiece—over a hundred more than last year, he said. Most of the customers from the nearby state of Maryland are of Philippine descent.

Alpha Travel sales went down by half for the

FAMILY/ A4



JENNIE ILUSTRE

**BEN DE GUZMAN**'s family at a holiday reunion. From left, his father Perry, cousin Mark, brother Roland, Ben, uncle Ver, aunt Nenita, uncle Frank and a guest Felicitas Esparas.

## Erap plays Santa Claus to orphans

By Volt Contreras

ACTOR-POLITICIAN Joseph Estrada yesterday played the odd role of a Santa Claus in jail to 120 orphans who visited him at his detention center in Quezon City.

Three Christmas songs and a "specially composed" poem for Estrada earned the kids from the Fundacion de Damas de Pilipinas orphanage P50,000 "aguinaldo" from the ousted President.

Aside from the cash donation, Estrada also treated the orphans to an early lunch of spaghetti and burgers.

He also handed out candies and toys to the children, Estrada told the INQUIRER in a phone interview

ERAP/ A12

BAGONG TAON NA! BAGONG BUHAY NA SANA!

# 13 slain in latest clash with Misuari followers

**By Martin P. Marfil and Christine O. Avendaño**

**MARINE troops raided a guerrilla camp in the Sulu jungle Saturday, setting off a clash that killed 13 combatants, including two soldiers, the Associated Press quoting the military reported Sunday.**

The five-hour clash on Jolo island was the latest in a series of battles in Mindanao where government troops have been battling insurgents and kidnap gangs.

The marines stumbled on the rebel encampment near the coastal town of Luuk while searching for armed men who wounded about a dozen marines in an ambush last week, said Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu, Southern Command chief.

Cimatu said the rebels consisted of Abu Sayyaf guerrillas and followers of Nur Misuari, former governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao who stands accused of rebellion.

Some 40 rebels, reinforced by about 100 of their comrades, fought in the clash that killed at least 11 guerrillas and two soldiers. At least 17 rebels and four soldiers were wounded, Cimatu said.

The rebels withdrew in small groups and were being chased by the soldiers, Cimatu said. He said the military learned of the rebel casualties through two-way radio intercepts.

Misuari is being held in Malaysia where he was arrested Nov. 24 while fleeing a Philippine military manhunt following a failed attempt at a rebellion by his followers.

Philippine officials said Misuari will be brought back to the country next month for trial.

Misuari, a former separatist guerrilla leader who signed a peace accord with the government in 1996, reportedly had allied himself with the Abu Sayyaf in recent months to stage attacks and disrupt the elections that picked his successor as ARMM governor.

The Abu Sayyaf has been linked to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida terrorist network and is currently holding an American couple and a Filipino nurse captive on the island of Basilan.

Philippine soldiers, backed by the US military with weapons and combat training, have been hunting the Abu Sayyaf guerrillas since May to rescue the hostages and destroy the rebel group.

The Philippine military warned yesterday it would treat the Misuari renegade group as "terrorists" if they continued to exploit the arrest of their leader in Malaysia.

The warning came from military spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan, who said the military has prepared several sites, including Fort Bonifacio in Makati, to hold Misuari in the event of his return to the country by Jan. 15.

"If they continue to threaten the peace, then they will be held responsible and face government preventive action... they will be treated as terrorists if they continue to exploit the arrest of Misuari for their own selfish ends and renege on the peace agreement," Adan said of Misauri's followers.

His remarks came in the wake of reports that Misuari would be handed over by Malaysia to the Philippines by Jan. 15.

Yesterday, Adan said both the police and the military had scouted around for a possible detention site for Misuari that included camps in and around Metro Manila.

Government authorities have filed rebellion charges against Misuari.

"The court would have a final say on that, upon the recommendation of the police. So on the part of the armed forces, we are preparing detention sites," Adan said.

For now, the military spokesperson said many of Misuari's followers have expressed a desire to live up to the 1996 peace agreement.

"While they sympathize with Misuari's plight, which is understandable, the government and the military can assure them he will be treated with respect. So they have nothing to worry about," Adan said.

With Misuari's impending deportation from Malaysia, a Mindanao congressman insisted yesterday the Moro leader was better off living in exile abroad "for now."

Basilan Rep. Gerry Salappudin, deputy speaker for Mindanao, said Misuari should be allowed to go to a third country for a "few years."

"This is to allow the new ARMM leadership to stabilize and govern effectively," Saluppudin said in a phone interview from Greece, as he acknowledged that Misuari still has his followers.

He suggested a third country could take Misuari on condition he does not conduct political activities against the Philippines and ARMM while in exile.

*With an AP report*

# Gloria junks American option on Burnhams but will listen to Tiahrt

**By Vincent Cabreza and Desiree Caluza**
*PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

TIAHRT

BAGUIO CITY—Allowing United States troops to join the rescue operation for an American missionary couple held by Abu Sayyaf bandits may not be the best option for the government at this time, President Macapagal-Arroyo said yesterday.

She admitted though that resolving the crisis quickly would help her economic agenda after various international bodies praised her macroeconomic policies but expressed concern over the country's peace and order situation.

The parents of Martin and Gracia Burnham had asked Malacañang to allow US troops to be involved in their rescue after noting the lengthy seven-month duration of the military's own rescue efforts in the jungles of Basilan.

The Burnham couple was snatched from the Dos Palmas beach resort in Palawan in May, along with murdered Californian Guillermo Sobero and 15 other Filipino tourists. All but the couple and nurse Deborah Yap have been recovered.

US Congressman Todd Tiahrt, who hails from the Burnhams' native Kansas, is scheduled to arrive shortly to personally plead with the President on behalf of Martin's parents, Paul and Oreta Burnham.

Ms Macapagal told reporters she has scheduled a New Year's Day meeting with Tiahrt although it was not clear whether she would meet with him at the Presidential Mansion here or in Manila.

She did not divulge what they would be discussing but Tiahrt said earlier he would try to urge the President to allow US troops to join in the rescue effort.

Ms Macapagal said she would listen to Tiahrt's impressions of the Basilan military operations in order to have "better basis for our conversation."

# GMA breaches security to get close to people at Rizal Day rites

**By Vincent Cabreza**
*PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

BAGUIO CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo broke through a security cordon at the first Rizal Day rites to be held at Baguio's 54-year-old Rizal monument yesterday so she could shake the hands of the many people who came to see her.

Fresh from "mending a rift" with former President Fidel Ramos over his alleged plans to run again in 2004, a glowing Ms Macapagal met with teachers, tourists, their children and curious Baguio residents by giving them firm handshakes and a friendly "Happy New Year" greeting.

She later offered the opposition an olive branch, saying many of her programs had actually been contributed by some of her toughest critics.

The INQUIRER got a curt "no" from presidential aides who were asked if the handshaking meant Ms Macapagal's 2004 presidential bid was on and she no longer felt threatened by Ramos.

Ms Macapagal insisted there was no rift with Ramos to mend during the last installment of her three-part special broadcast of "May Gloria ang Bukas Mo" at the Presidential Mansion an hour later.

Reacting to the INQUIRER banner headline on Sunday, "GMA, FVR kiss, make up," the President told host Solita Monsod that Ramos and Speaker Jose de Venecia had initiated the kiss.

"Because of the kiss (from Ramos and De Venecia), the newspapers concluded that we had kissed and made up after all," she said in Filipino.

But De Venecia had confirmed the "rift" which he acknowledged was fueled by rumors that Ramos intended to challenge a constitutional provision barring a former president from seeking election.

Ramos formally denied he intended to run again at a press conference here on Friday.

Ms Macapagal reiterated in her broadcast yesterday that she would have avoided the John Hay golf ceremonial tee-off, where the kiss-and-make-up session supposedly occurred, had Ramos not prodded her to come. She said she did not even stay long.

"I haven't been accepting invitations here in Baguio because it's my vacation. I declined the invitation to grace the Camp John Hay ceremonial tee-off on Saturday because after my telecast I was scheduled to fly to Mt. Province," she explained to Monsod.

Ms Macapagal said she was only persuaded to grace the tee-off by Ramos, who joined her for cocktails at the annual Christmas party of the American Embassy held Friday evening at the US ambassador's residence at John Hay.

She did not pursue the topic again at the telecast, or in front of reporters later.

Ms Macapagal wore a black-and-red striped coat with matching shawl in a locally designed textile pattern familiar to Baguio residents when she trooped the line of Philippine Military Academy (PMA) cadets.

After the wreath-laying at the Rizal monument, the President suddenly turned to face a small line of well-wishers and began to greet each one. She went around the entire park, chatting with onlookers and smiling softly at the children.

First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo and daughter Luli followed Ms Macapagal and shook hands with the well-wishers.

"I'm voting for you," one man told her.

"I'm not washing this (hand) anymore, she held my hand," the principal of the Baguio City Central Elementary School said to her companions.

In her TV broadcast, Ms Macapagal again offered the political opposition a chance to help in devising a comprehensive national agenda that would prepare the country for an international recession.

She said the offer had been made before.

The President pointed out that her government had implemented most of the suggestions offered by opposition Senators Edgardo Angara and Blas Ople.

**PRESIDENT** Macapagal-Arroyo leads flag-raising rites at Baguio City's Burnham Park to mark Rizal Day yesterday, with First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo and Armed Forces Chief Gen. Diomedio Villanueva. TOOTS SOBERANO

# President offers to be Baguio's 'poster girl'

**By Vincent Cabreza and Desiree Caluza**
*PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

BAGUIO CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo is offering her services free of charge so her favorite holiday spot can reclaim its reputation as the travel destination of choice.

Advertisements for Baguio's famed climate will soon feature the President's movie star smile as Ms Macapagal has agreed to become the "poster girl" for Baguio City and Benguet province in the same way that movie star Dawn Zulueta had pitched Davao and actor Cesar Montano his native Bohol.

She made the offer at the special Sunday telecast of her weekly program, "May Gloria ang Bukas Mo," which was broadcast live from the Presidential Mansion here.

Interviewed by host Solita Monsod, the President said she was so elated by her trip last Saturday to the Cordillera town of Barlig in Mt. Province that she was inspired to offer her services.

To reach Barlig, which boasts some of the most pristine rice terraces in the Cordilleras, the presidential party had to take a long helicopter ride and make a 20-minute climb through several "cardiac hills," Ms Macapagal said.

But when they reached the town's hidden terraces, Ms Macapagal was pleasantly surprised to see some Japanese tourists.

The sight of foreign travelers at one of the country's least advertised "tourism treasures" bolstered her resolve to reinforce the country's tourism programs, Ms Macapagal said.

The government is promoting eco-tourism and beach tourism in various parts of the country to boost visitor volume, she said.

But with the budget deficit, Ms Macapagal said the tourism program would have to live within its very "small" 2002 budget.

One of the President's swift solutions involves offering her services free of charge to pitch her favorite vacation spot.

"Do you know who Davao's image model is today? Dawn Zulueta. Oh my, I still belong to the Margie Moran generation," she exclaimed. Moran was 1974's Miss Universe and is married to Davao Rep. Antonio Floreindo Jr.

"I think Bohol has Cesar Montano or (his wife) Sunshine Cruz. I will do the same for Baguio since I'm often here anyway and there are many photographs of me doing eco-tourism work here," she said.

Tourism officials here said the President's offer was not just "for show."

"That's very true. Her posters are being prepared now. She really wants to showcase Baguio. In fact, she is the very reason why Baguio has so many visitors this week," said Purificacion Molintas, the tourism department's director for the Cordilleras.

Molintas said Baguio's 26 hotels are fully booked until the end of the holidays.

"Because of her vacation here (that began on Dec. 27 and is expected to last until Jan. 1), she drew visitors from as far away as Nueva Vizcaya and Batangas," Molintas said.

Police noted that the traffic volume alone grew by 20 percent, as a result of the visitor influx—an indication that more and more domestic tourists have chosen the city as the most cost-effective vacation spot this year.

# Power, water rate increases 'insignificant' –Macapagal

BAGUIO CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday dismissed concerns about a projected increase in water and power rates next year, describing any utility price increase today as insignificant when seen against the country's "larger" problems.

The public should instead expect a "stabilizing impact" from the $5-billion Malampaya natural gas project in Palawan, Ms Macapagal said during the special telecast of her program "May Gloria ang Bukas Mo" here.

The Malampaya project could cut the country's oil importation dramatically when it goes into full production schedule next year, the President said.

The country is bracing for the impact of reduced world oil production on fuel prices after the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) agreed on Dec. 28 to reduce its output in a bid to push up crude oil prices.

The President also brushed aside the impact of increased water rates.

"The percentage of water consumption in the market basket is not that substantial," she told economist Solita Monsod, who hosted the three-part special telecast which included the President's "Report to the Nation."

The "market basket" refers to the list of basic goods and services that an average Filipino family would consume.

"And there is much to say about paying for (urban water). I was in Payatas (Quezon City) last month, and I was told that people there relied on water worth (at least) P200 each month. Private water distributors have helped expand the utility coverage, and what is a P40 increase in consumption rates each month compared to the current P200 each month?" Ms Macapagal asked in Filipino.

But the President also acknowledged that utility rates were escalating in the absence of investor interest in the privatization of the National Power Corp.

A deregulated power industry is expected to cushion energy prices, Ms Macapagal said, especially after the country achieved a 52-percent self-sufficiency rating in power generation.

# GMA 'hopeful' on launder law

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo said yesterday she was hopeful an international task force would not impose sanctions against the Philippines over deficiencies in the new Anti-Money Laundering Law.

Finance officials last week said the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF) had asked the Philippines to improve certain provisions in the law.

The country was also asked to respond to criticism of the law before a plenary meeting of the FATF, a task force of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, in Hong Kong next month.

In her end-of-year economic "Report to the Nation," Ms Macapagal said: "What I understand is that they have criticisms... but the way I understand it, it's not so bad that they would stop transactions (with Philippine banks)."

She said the FATF may just be airing an "opinion" on the law, which was passed in September.

This did not specifically mean the group's members would apply economic sanctions on the Philippines which could include ignoring the transactions of millions of Filipino overseas workers. *AFP*

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Those over 45 years old need not attend. The venues and dates are as follows:

| | Quezon City | Muntinlupa City | Lipa City | General Trias | Lucena City |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Date | January 3 & 4 | January 5 | January 7 | January 8 | January 9 |
| Day | Thursday & Friday | Saturday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday |
| Time | 2:00 PM | 9:00 AM | 6:00 PM | 9:00 AM & 2:00 PM | 2:00 PM |
| Venue | Palgen Travel<br>26 Metalino Street<br>Diliman<br>Quezon City | Fresnedi Building<br>37 National Road<br>Putatan<br>Muntinlupa City | Lipa Royale<br>Pres. Laurel<br>Hi-way<br>Lipa City | Hidden Vega Private Pool<br>Lot 28 Block 6<br>Stateland Subdivision<br>General Trias Cavite | Fresh Air Resort<br>Maharlika Hi-way<br>Brgy. Iyam<br>Lucena City |
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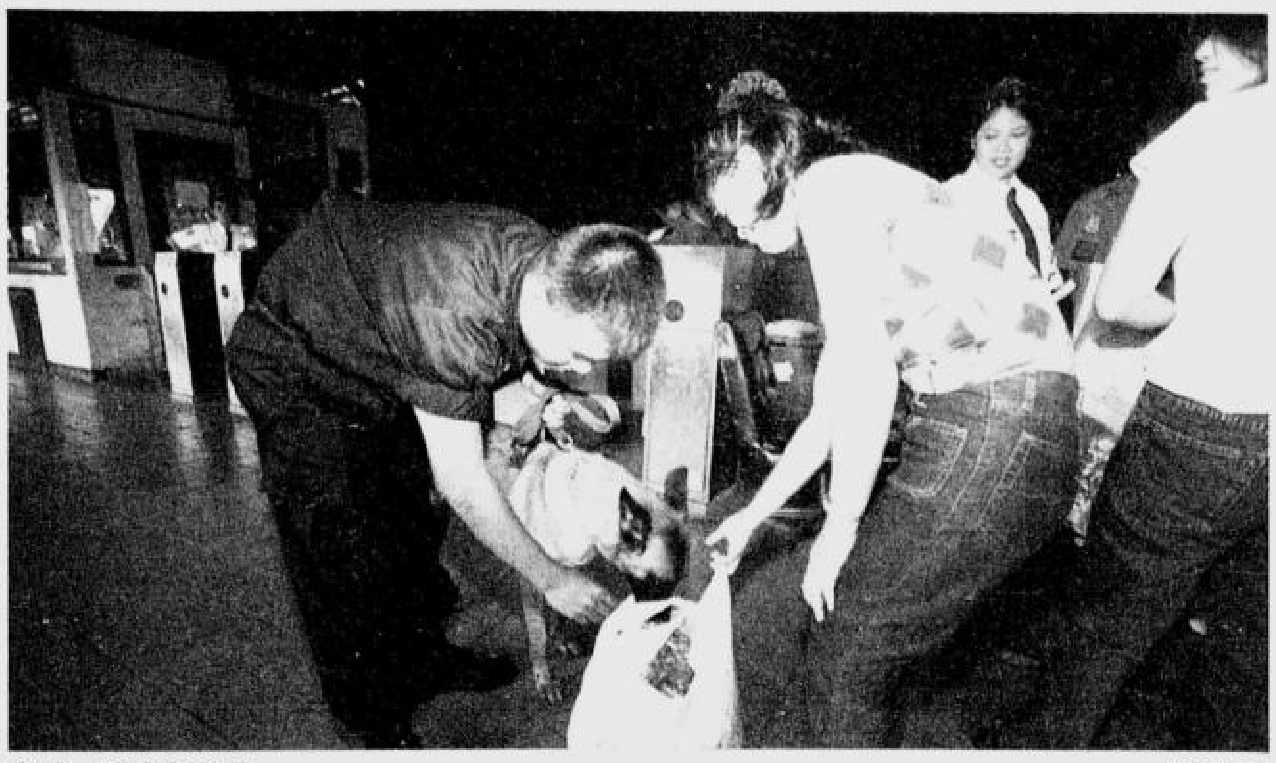
| Contact | Rachel | Eddie Olea | Narding Olea | Yeng Quino | Joy Castillo |

**The seminar fee is P100.00. As seats are limited, we highly recommend booking to secure your place.**



SAFE, NOT SORRY JESS YUSON

A bomb-sniffing dog noses through a train rider's shopping bag as the police and military went on heightened alert yesterday, the first anniversary of the Rizal Day bombings that ripped through five places in Metro Manila last year. The vigilance paid off as no untoward incidents were reported to mark the anniversary.

### BRITISH AIRLINE LENDS HAND

# RP tourism gets European boost

**By Norman Bordadora**

THOUGHTS of Concordes-load of European tourists jetting in could well be dancing in Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon's head before the new year.

And this an entire 12 months before 2003, which has been dubbed by the World Tourism Organization as Visit Philippines Year.

An upsurge in European tourists has become a possibility as British Airways—one of only two airlines that offer supersonic Concorde flights—continues to promote the Philippines as a major Asian destination.

Bernie Lazaro, tourism attaché in London, said the airline has included the Philippines in its Holidays Brochure.

Lazaro said Boracay with its fine white sand beaches and Palawan with its eco-tourism are attractive to the British market.

The British are also interested in such scenic spots as the Chocolate Hills of Bohol and the rice terraces in Banaue, he said.

"With the serenity in these places, they would be convinced the Philippines is more than just kidnappings and the Abu Sayyaf," Gordon said.

Lazaro said that aside from British Airways, the Association of British Travel Agents has noted that the Philippines could attract more visitors with more aggressive overseas promotion.

"The ABTA said peace and order was not so much a problem as the lack of promotional materials for local destinations," Lazaro said.

"The ABTA said that with so many beautiful sights, the Philippines could easily make it as a big tourism player in Asia," he added.

Gordon affirmed the comments made by the Europeans.

"We have all the plusses. There may be some negative factors but peace and order is not one of them," he said.

Gordon insisted, though, that the country needed to get past its image problem on peace and order that resulted from the terrorist episodes in the south.

He also compared the advertising budget for international promotions of the Department of Tourism of $637,000 to Thailand's budget of $31.53 million. The Philippines' budget is only two percent of Thailand's, he pointed out.

To address this setback, Gordon said he has called on the private sector to help in promoting Philippine tourism.

In a recent meeting with the Board of Airline Representatives, Gordon told them, "Good business in tourism means more jobs for our countrymen."

A major US airline has committed to feature the Philippines on the cover of its in-flight magazine, he said.

Gordon said he also gave numerous interviews to European media outfits when he was in Berlin recently for the International Tourism Bourse.

It was noted, however, that a supersonic Concorde jet would not be able to land at any of the country's major airports because the Concorde needs an extra long runway. The runway at the former US airbase at Clark Field, Pampanga, might fit the bill, sources said.

# 6 killed, 18 injured in jeep-train crash

**By Juan Escandor Jr.**
*PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

NAGA CITY—Six persons were killed and 18 injured when an overloaded passenger jeepney and a Philippine National Railways train collided late Saturday night in Nabua, Camarines Sur, police reported.

Police identified the dead as Andres Baldosa Sr., Crisinte Patricia, Tiburcio Espalmado, Vanessa Espalmado, Michell Mendeville and a male passenger whose identity had not been ascertained.

A police report said the jeepney had come from Barangay La Purisima in Nabua town and was headed for Guinobatan, Albay, when it collided with the train bound for Iriga City from Legazpi City.

The accident happened at an intersection in Barangay Paloyon, also in Nabua, when the jeepney reportedly overtook stopped vehicles and collided with the train.

The accident was the second to happen at the particular railroad crossing in Paloyon this year.

Constancio Toledano, PNR district manager in Naga City, quoting a report reaching his office, said the jeepney was overloaded, with passengers riding on its roof.

Toledano said most of the injured were thrown off the jeepney's roof.

The report, he said, showed the jeepney did not stop at the crossing behind the other vehicles that had halted for the train.

It overtook the other cars until it collided with the train, which the driver probably did not see, according to police Supt. Randy Rosero.

The driver was not identified or was it known if he was one of the dead or injured.

Rosero said the jeepney was crushed after it was dragged several meters by the train, leading to the fatalities.

Toledano said the railroad crossing at Paloyon had become dangerous.

He said the luminous warning signs installed in the area by the PNR do not suffice to prevent accidents.

He said four full-time crossing guards assigned to the area would be more effective in preventing mishaps.

He called on the Nabua municipal government and the departments of transportation and public works to work out a way to employ full-time crossing guards.

He said the PNR at this time, because of its dire financial situation, cannot provide guard service although it might be able to provide a light signal to warn motorists of approaching trains. *With an AFP report*

# US' right to land extended

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's blanket authority to allow United States warplanes and vessels to "land, dock, refuel and fly over Philippine territory" has been extended, a foreign affairs official said over the weekend.

The blanket authority, which was given as part of the country's assistance to the US campaign to hunt down the perpetrators of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the US, was supposed to have ended on Dec. 31.

But NSC adviser Roilo Golez said there was no deadline given because the assistance to the Americans was "continuing."

"There was no deadline in the first place. What's the need for an extension? The Americans can come here anytime because they are helping our troops to enhance their fighting capabilities, particularly in the fight against the Abu Sayyaf," Golez said.

The DFA official, who requested anonymity, said the extension was granted upon the recommendation of the Department of National Defense and the National Security Council.

Following the Sept. 11 bombings, the NSC adopted a resolution allowing US vessels and aircraft to enter Philippine territory. *Christine Herrera*

# Attempt to veto nat'l budget proviso scored

**By Juliet Labog-Javellana**

PARTY-LIST Rep. Etta Rosales of Akbayan yesterday expressed alarm over reports that private lending institutions are pressuring Malacañang to veto a historic provision in the 2002 national budget bill scrapping the payment of service fees for loans incurred by government employees.

The veto would affect two million government workers, including about half a million public school teachers, Rosales said.

Rosales asked President Macapagal-Arroyo not to veto Section 36 of the General Appropriations Act of 2002.

The budget bill had declared as illegal the collection of service fees by government agencies such as the education, labor and defense departments to facilitate the collection of loan payments from the salaries of government employees.

Congress had deleted Section 37 of the bill which allowed the collection of service fees and interest on these loans, Rosales said.

She said Section 36 of the bill specified that no deductions could be made from teachers' salaries outside of those for state insurance firms like the Government Service Insurance System and the Pag-Ibig Fund.

The provision states that the take-home pay of teachers should not be less than P3,000 a month.

# Cabinet men need to be re-appointed

THE PRESIDENT needs to re-appoint four Cabinet members before Jan. 14 if she wants the Commission on Appointments to consider their nominations when Congress reopens next year, opposition Sen. Blas Ople said yesterday.

In a press statement, Ople reminded President Macapagal-Arroyo that she needed to re-appoint Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez, Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez and Finance Secretary Isidro Camacho.

The appointments of the four were deemed bypassed when the CA adjourned for the holidays last week.

Commission on Audit chair Guillermo Carague was also deemed bypassed, as well as ambassador-designate to Germany Rufus Rodriguez, who was the only diplomat bypassed by the CA.

The appointments of Commission on Elections chair Alfredo Benipayo and other new Comelec commissioners have yet to be submitted to the CA.

The CA has so far confirmed 13 Cabinet members with Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes and National Economic Development Authority director general Dante Canlas as the latest additions to the list. *Rocky Nazareno*

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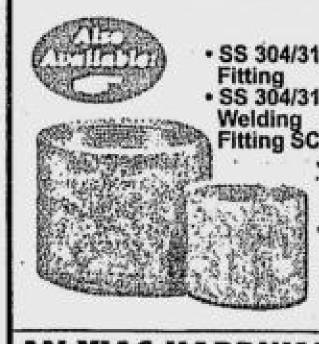

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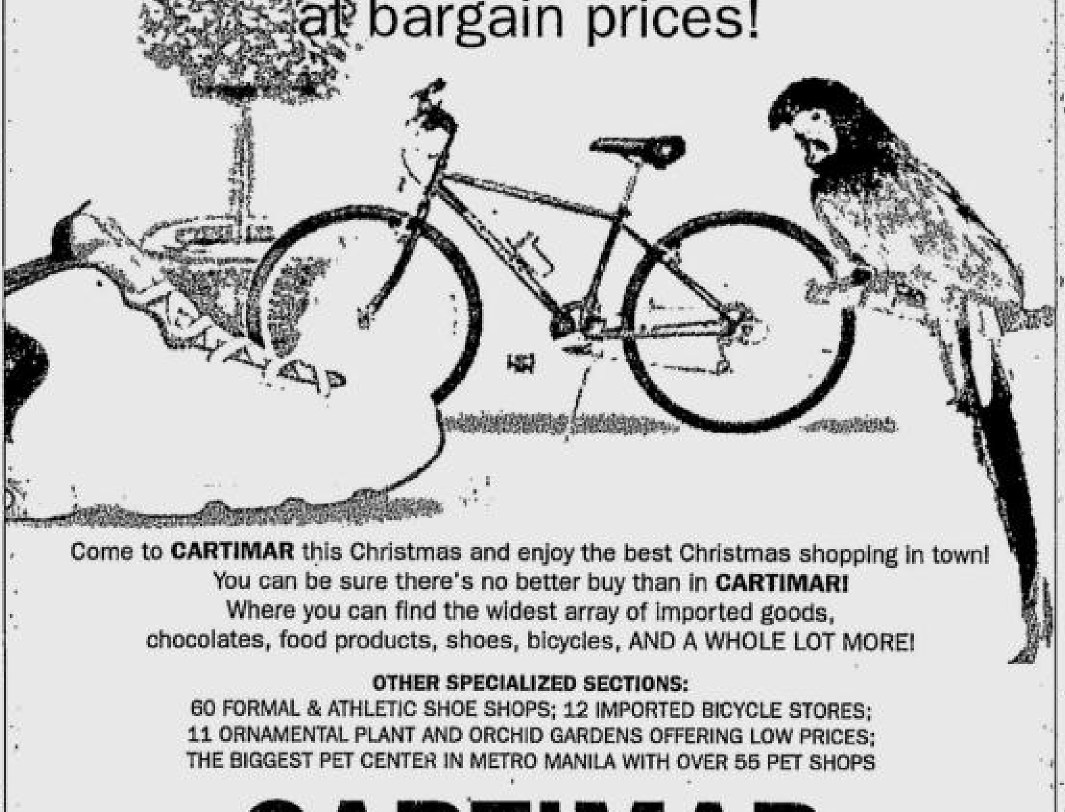

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News that makes a difference

# Isafp grills ex-Lacson men

(From page A1)

were determining whether the explosives used in the bombings in Metro Manila on Dec. 30, 2000 came from the same cache. The bombings killed at least 17 people and maimed more than a hundred others.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has ordered an investigation to find out why the members of the disbanded SRU were in possession of the explosives, according to the source.

"But obviously there is an evil intent behind the possession of these explosives. Where will they use it in the first place?" the source said.

In her "Report to the Nation," aired from Baguio City yesterday, Ms Macapagal said the Armed Forces was "really on the alert."

"*Magaling ang kanilang intelligence. Naagapan nila kung sino ba yong gustong mag-adventure pa* (They have good intelligence. They were able to neutralize those planning something against the government)," the President said.

Ms Macapagal was obviously referring to certain segments in the military, which are allegedly planning to destabilize her administration.

But Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan, military spokesperson, downplayed speculations that the arrest of Miraflor was linked to any coup attempt.

"This is not related to any coup . . . This was investigated months ago, about June . . . and this is just a follow-up of the information received months ago," Adan told defense reporters yesterday.

The SRU was disbanded last June on orders of Gen. Diomedio Villanueva, AFP chief of staff, amid talks of a destabilization plot against the Macapagal administration.

"To the mind of the chief of staff, it was better to consider a possible worst-case scenario," Adan told defense reporters at that time.

Adan said the disbandment of the SRU was intended to "prevent the possible exploitation of this unit."

The SRU, an elite group within the elite SWAG of the Navy, specialized in demolition and commando tactics.

SRU officers and men were receiving extra allowances of at least P10,000 a month when they were detailed with the PAOCTF, now also disbanded.

At the time of its disbandment, it was led by Miraflor, Lt. Junior Grade Leo Dimoc, and a certain Lt. Junior Grade Camino. The SRU's 77 personnel were sent back to their mother units in the Navy.

Miraflor was arrested at the Sangley Naval Base in Cavite while reportedly visiting the SWAG headquarters for a Christmas reunion. Talk about the arrest swept Camp Aguinaldo that day but military officials had kept it under wraps. Miraflor has since been kept incommunicado.

### Raid

On Dec. 21, a military intelligence team raided the barracks of a certain Petty Officer 1 Sotto, a non-commissioned office in charge of the Explosives and Ordnance Disposal team of the SWAG, at the SWAG headquarters in Sangley Point at 10 a.m., according to an unsigned statement sent to the INQUIRER.

The statement said the team from the Isafp was led by a certain Major Zaragosa.

It said MIG-15 agents forcibly opened Sotto's locker where they found explosives duly issued to him. The explosives were kept in the locker because a permanent storage facility for explosives has yet to be constructed, according to the statement.

"At that time, Rosauro Sarmiento, the current SWAG commanding officer, duly informed Zaragosa, his mistah (batch mate) in PMA Class 1987, that the explosives were in the inventory of explosives issued to SWAG.

"However, Zaragosa, who claimed to be acting upon orders from Col. Victor Corpus, Isapf chief, ignored Sarmiento's explanation and went on to seize the explosives purportedly as evidence," the unsigned statement said.

The source confirmed that Miraflor's arrest was the offshoot of the confiscation of 15 blocks of C-4 from the locker of one of his former men, Sotto.

"Upon interrogation, Sotto revealed that the explosives were originally kept at Miraflor's room inside the base. Part of the cache was later moved to Sotto's locker and the rest scattered in a number of areas," the source said. Eighty-five pieces of explosives were recovered two days later.

The source said the C-4 was withdrawn from the Navy armory in Sangley in September 2000.

The SRU's name also surfaced during the Senate's investigation of the alleged involvement of Lacson in drug trafficking.

SRU men were allegedly used to recover drugs dumped from ships into the sea, according to witnesses Mary "Rosebud" Ong and Angelo "Ador" Mawanay.

### Fair treatment

Adan said that Miraflor was being investigated because he failed to turn over the explosives to the government.

"The investigation is centered on him (Miraflor) because he was the commander but we can assure those Philippine Military Academy classes . . . (that there will be) fair and just treatment (for Miraflor)," Adan said.

The AFP spokesperson advised Miraflor's classmates to just wait for the results of the investigation. "This is an action of the chain of the command and they should respect it," Adan said.

PMA classes 1990 and 1991 had reportedly issued a joint statement protesting the arrest of Miraflor. Members of the classes said the only sins of those arrested were their being former members of the PAOCTF.

PMA "Sambisig" class of 1991 president Capt. Dennis Kilayco denied yesterday issuing any joint statement.

"We are issuing this collective statement to once and for all clear doubts, dismiss insinuations, and correct public misconceptions against us that may have been brought about by these news articles," Kilayco said in the signed statement.

"The PMA 'Sambisig' class of 1991 remains professional and continuously adheres to the AFP chain of command," he added.

Adan denied any "vendetta" in the arrests. "It has nothing to do with that. Under military regulations, a responsible officer or personnel who had been issued weapons, ammunition or explosives, must account for them," Adan said.

"Otherwise, he has to be investigated for administrative lapses. It is our duty to account for all government property issued to us. So, it has nothing to do with political vendetta . . . This has nothing to do with politics. This is purely an administrative action being undertaken by the Philippine Navy," he said.

# Peace and order Gloria's priority in 2002

(From page A1)

hopeful that the Muslim secessionist problem in Mindanao would be resolved soon because "based on the actions and body and oral language of Muslim rebels, I can see that they want peace."

The President, however, said this could not be said of communist rebels because "until now I hear that they really want to overthrow the government."

"That's why I'm praying for them," Ms Macapagal said.

### One of the worst

A survey of multinational corporations by the Economist Intelligence Unit earlier this year showed the Philippines was considered one of the worst places in Southeast Asia to do business because of corruption, crime and violence.

The government expects a 3.3-percent growth in the gross domestic product this year, despite the recession woes plaguing the rest of the region, and expects this to grow to 4-4.5 percent next year.

A Reuters poll of economists has predicted, on average, that growth this year will be 3 percent, falling to 2.86 percent next year.

"If our economy was stable in 2001, maybe we can hope that it will remain healthy next year," Ms Macapagal said.

### Investment flow

She said she expected some $4 billion in agreements signed when she was on a visit to the United States in November would begin to flow into the country in 2002.

The package consists of $2 billion in government assistance and another $2 billion in private sector investments.

The President also said that the country would feel the benefits of the Dec. 10 national economic summit held at the Manila Hotel within the next six months.

"The objective of the summit was to search for short-term, medium-term and long-term solutions to our economic problems which resulted from the Sept. 11 attacks" on the United States, Ms Macapagal said.

Noting that the summit was proposed by opposition Sen. Blas Ople, the President reiterated her call for a moratorium on politicking.

"I hope that in the next 12 months and 365 days there will be unity among all parties for the good of Mr. and Mrs. Juan de la Cruz," the President said. ***Reports from Carlito Pablo and Reuters***

# GMA's wish list

(From page A1)

President Macapagal-Arroyo's power doesn't extend to things every other person is also powerless about. Things like an untroubled tomorrow, joy in the family and such other imponderables. And so just like any wife and parent, she too has compiled a wish list for her loved ones for the coming year.

She wishes that her husband would for once be free from the kind of scandals that he has been dragged into over the past year. She wishes her eldest son, who is to get hitched next year, a happy marriage. The President hopes that her only daughter finds a "lasting love." She wants her youngest child to finish law school.

The President's New Year's wish list for her family was pried out of her by a persistent Solita Monsod, former economic planning secretary, during the telecast of the President's weekly program, "May Gloria ang Bukas Mo."

Ms Macapagal said she wished that her husband, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, would not be implicated in what she called political intrigues next year.

"For Mike (First Gentleman Arroyo), *malibre sa intriga*," she said.

Arroyo's name had earlier cropped up in an alleged telecommunications franchise scam. He was accused of having received bribes from two telecommunication firms, supposedly for working to overturn a presidential veto of their congressional franchises. The Senate has still to wrap up an investigation into the matter, but a principal witness had gone on record to say that no money had actually changed hands.

Arroyo was also implicated in the supposed misuse of Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office funds.

However, the Ombudsman's Fact-Finding and Investigation Bureau had found no irregularities in the questioned disbursement of P250 million in PCSO funds.

Ombudsman Aniano Desierto said his office could not therefore prosecute any of the government officials involved in the disbursement or Arroyo, who was accused of allegedly misusing the funds by former PCSO media consultant Robert Rivero.

For Ms Macapagal's eldest son, Juan Miguel or Mikey, the President said she wished him happiness in married life.

Mikey, 32, vice governor of Pampanga and a sometime-actor, had earlier announced that he was to marry his girlfriend and second cousin Angela Montenegro next year.

"Yes, I like the girl," the President replied after being asked by Monsod if she approved of Montenegro.

She said she knew the Montenegro family well. She explained that her husband and Montenegro's mother, Charito, were first cousins.

The President's face brightened when asked about her wish for daughter, Evangelina Lourdes, more popularly known as Luli, a member of the staff of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) Foundation.

### Getting on in years

"(I wish her) joy, that she will find lasting love." She quickly added, "*Naku, magagalit na naman siya sa akin* (She'll get mad at me again)."

Monsod asked the President why she wanted her daughter Luli to settle down soon.

"*May edad na eh* (She's getting older)," the President retorted amid giggles. The President's daughter is 30.

Monsod, known for her combativeness, butted in, "Are you saying that a woman is not fulfilled until she is married?"

She added, "Are you saying that (Budget Secretary) Emilia Boncodin and (Labor Secretary) Patricia Sto. Tomas are not fulfilled?"

Ms Macapagal smiled and clarified that she wanted her daughter to get married soon because she worried about her daughter's biological clock ticking away fruitlessly.

Ms Macapagal almost forgot her youngest child, Diosdado Ignacio or Dato, had Monsod not inquired about her wish for her "most handsome son."

The President said she wanted Dato, 27, to finish law. Dato is a sophomore law student at the Ateneo.

"I hope he will make it through law school . . . But if not, what is important is their (Arroyo children) chosen careers," she said.

Earlier, Monsod asked the President what Christmas gifts she received from her husband and children.

Ms Macapagal paused and admitted to Monsod that she could not remember. Monsod teased her about her "poor recollection."

But later, the President said she received several pairs of stockings from Luli. She said her daughter bought them on her recent trip abroad.

She said her husband had not given her anything yet but disclosed that he would gift her with a gold chain which she herself would pick out.

In return, Ms Macapagal said, she would take Arroyo to his tailor and have several pairs of pants made for him so that they're not too "baggy."

# Wounded deer sold for P10,000; too late the heroics

(From page A1)

left foreleg and its antler chopped off.

Alfred Pascual, executive director of the DENR in Cagayan Valley, disclosed that Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez ordered him on Friday to rescue or retrieve the animal "at all cost."

Pascual said Alvarez, who was in Baguio City as part of President Macapagal-Arroyo's entourage, had asked him to get the animal "by hook or by crook."

Pascual ordered environment and natural resources officers Regidor de Leon and Nicasio Pascua, along with Mina Labugen of the wildlife office, to talk with the new owner of the wounded deer and to possibly buy it to save it from further harm.

"They were late by a few hours," Pascual said in a telephone interview.

### Buyer on a pickup

The DENR team could not determine the fate of the deer—where it was taken or whether it was treated or butchered by its buyer—as residents could not provide adequate information on the buyer. The only information they could offer was that the buyer was aboard a pickup truck.

But whoever bought the deer had violated the law, environment officials said.

Munditalin Lim, Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB) assistant director, said the sale and possession of wildlife species without a permit from the DENR was punishable under the Wildlife Act of 2001 (Republic Act 9147).

She said the possessor could be fined P1 million or sentenced to 10 years in prison.

Alleged deer owner Rogelio Aquino was not around when environment officials went to the site where the deer was tied to an electric post.

"The deer should be treated by the one who bought it. We know it's illegal (to sell this endangered species), but because of economic difficulties, (people) are doing it (hunting and selling the animals)," said resident Noel Misla, 29.

He said the deer's remaining left antler was chopped off by Aquino before the animal was bought.

Julio Juliano, Aquino's cousin, said the animal was caught in the mountains of Sitio Burgos here.

He said selling endangered species like deer and wild pigs was rampant in the area and in nearby Sta. Fe, Nueva Vizcaya, because the trade was lucrative.

"Residents have no other source of income so they buy and sell animals," Juliano said.

But there are many Santa Clauses willing to save the deer should its new owner decide to turn it over to the government.

Many of these Santas are animal experts from the Central Luzon State University (CLSU) in the Science City of Muñoz.

### How to treat the wounds

Dr. Emilio Cruz, director of the CLSU Small Ruminants Center, said the deer should be restricted in its movements so its wounds would not fester.

The foot might have to be amputated if the wound does not heal.

Dr. Oliver Lee Roque, a veterinarian and in charge of the deer-keeping project of the CLSU's Agricultural Science and Technology School, said treating a wounded deer in an enclosure away from other animals would be a better way.

He said the animal should not be kept in a muddy or dirty place to prevent infection of its wound.

He also said regular cleaning of the wound was needed for it to heal faster.

Roque and Cruz expressed willingness to play Santa to the wounded animal should it be brought here for treatment.

The university's veterinarians were alerted Friday by Dr. Rodolfo Undan, CLSU president, to provide assistance to save the deer.

The university has an animal hospital that can take care of the wounded deer.

Undan was earlier contacted by the INQUIRER group, which asked if the university was willing to take care of the animal. "Very much willing," he said, "as the preservation of indigenous species is also our university concern."

The deer, according to INQUIRER reporter Tessa Salazar, was chanced upon by her group on Dec. 22 while the animal was grazing by the roadside.

Feeling a sense of pity for the animal, Salazar offered to buy it for P3,500 but the woman, who owned the store just across from where the deer was found, said the owner of the animal had instructed her to sell it for P7,000.

Later, the supposed owner of the deer, Aquino, said that the animal was his pet and that he was giving it antibiotics for its wounds.

Aries Espinosa, assistant editor of the INQUIRER'S People, Events and Products who was with Salazar's group going to Sagada, Mt. Province, said the deer appeared tame.

He said the group told Aquino that it would return on Jan. 10 to get the animal and take it to the CLSU.

### Bugkalot tribe

Espinosa said they were told that Aquino bought the animal from a Bugkalot tribesman.

Other Santa Clauses have offered to help the wounded deer.

Lilia Fernando, ecosystem management specialist of the DENR's protected areas and wildlife bureau, said she would coordinate with their personnel in the area to take the wounded animal to the CLSU.

She said Lim had instructed her to do whatever must be done to save the animal.

Fernando expressed the hope that the new owner of the wounded deer could donate the animal to the DENR.

The DENR will temporarily put the animal under the custody of the CLSU.

Buying a deer may give a bad example to the people, according to Fernando.

### Doe a deer, a female deer

A few meters from where the wounded deer was once kept, the INQUIRER met Oliver Balera, 24, whose father Dominador, 54, is domesticating animals and snakes.

Inside their house, the INQUIRER found a 2-year-old and a 7-month-old male and female deer whose feet bore string marks caused by *silo* (a style of catching animals and birds using a trap made of string).

There were also various species of snakes and monkeys kept in the house.

But the Baleras denied selling the animals, claiming they bought them from Bugkalot tribesmen in the area to be taken care of as pets.

The older Balera, who claimed to have spent two years training in wildlife protection under the DENR, said they planned to release the deer once they are treated.

### Weak government support

He said there was widespread selling of endangered species due to weak government support in protecting the wildlife. Environment officials said Nueva Vizcaya is identified as a "hotspot" for selling animals, especially endangered species.

But De Leon, a former environment officer in Nueva Vizcaya, said they had established rescue centers for endangered species caught by hunters. He also dismissed reports that the trade of endangered animals in the area was rampant.

# Family ties triumph . . .

(From page A1)

last three months. Until then, nobody was making ticket reservations for a Christmas trip to the Philippines, he told the INQUIRER.

"I was very, very surprised. Obviously, family ties were stronger than the terrorist scare," he said.

### Family first

With potential terrorist attacks and heightened security now a fact of life in the United States, one family said Christmas reunions gained urgency and meaning this year.

Ben de Guzman, community education director for the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, a major civil rights group, said the terrorist attacks on New York City's World Trade Center and the Pentagon in this US capital have made people focused on what's really important in life.

"Families are now everyone's top priority, and so is being with them for the holidays," said De Guzman, whose family members came from all over the United States for the *noche buena* (Christmas Eve dinner).

### Santa Claus

Other Filipinos didn't just go to the Philippines for their family reunions. Some of them went home and played Santa to their poor countrymen.

Feed the Hungry Inc., composed of area community leaders, was determined to carry on its yearly tradition of playing Santa Claus to disabled and indigent children in the Philippines from December to early February.

"The children look forward to this every year," said co-founder Teresita Calderon. "How can we not come?"

In the Philippines, the Commission for Filipinos Overseas coordinates the group's schedule. Since the '90s, Feed the Hungry volunteers go to the same organizations in Metro Manila and the provinces that serve the indigent and disabled children in its list, and add some on request. The group also spreads cheer among Metro Manila's senior citizens.

On Dec. 13, volunteers visited Waling Waling cottage at the Elsie Gaches Village. With the help of the Catholic Women's League, they gave away Christmas gift bags to infants and children with Down's Syndrome and other disabilities.

Other toddlers in an adjacent Waling-Waling building are either mentally retarded or were abandoned by their parents at the village's gate.

On Dec. 15, another group spread holiday cheer in Lipa City and Batangas City. The volunteers were treated to lunch at the home of Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, a friend of volunteer Baby Vicerra.

Some of the volunteers already in the Philippines are: Alma Conty, Baby Vicerra, Des Buhain, Mercy Sebastian, Solita Wakefield, Myriam Tanchoco, Vangie Ganuelas, Gina Farinas, Norma Samson. Due to leave soon are Pablito Alarcon, Percy Solis, Gloria Caoile, Lottie Buhain, Ethel Sanidad, Eva Barrion, Sol Ilagan, Evelyn Laguindanao.

Feed the Hungry gets its resources from its fund-raising activities: Project Handog 2001, $2,500; sundries raffle, $3,500; and carpet auction, $4,000. Car raffle winner David Peterson donated $7,500 or half of the car's worth of $15,000. From total funds raised, the group purchased backpacks and school supplies, toiletries, vitamins, T-shirts, noodles and canned goods.

Volunteers, however, pay for their own roundtrip plane fares.

### Rarely home

Like most young people, Richie Soliven, 19, of Norfolk, Virginia, located about 180 miles south of this capital city, is rarely home.

But last Christmas, he decided to have dinner with his parents—Romeo, a disabled, retired US Navy steward and Victoria, a former Philippine teacher—and brothers. "I wanted to be with my friends, but the tragedy on Sept. 11 made me want to spend as much time as I can with my family," he said.

Nationally, American citizens went ahead with their traditional Christmas family reunions, with majority, or about 80 percent, opting to drive than to fly.

Among those who traveled by air were De Guzman's siblings and cousins. They came from the West Coast's San Jose, California (about 3,000 miles from here), and Gulfport, Mississippi in the south. As in years past, they all congregated on Christmas in Mahwah in New Jersey, near the East Coast's New York, about 240 miles north of this capital.

Aside from assorted cousins, among those present at the reunion were De Guzman's parents Perry, a civil engineer, and Connie, a retired legal secretary. Eldest brother Edwin, whose job involves membership work for a corporation in New York, also came, and so did Ben's twin brother Roland, a lieutenant in the US Navy who will soon enroll in a graduate school in Berkeley, California.

Ben de Guzman said his family's holiday celebration reflected the lessons learned from the Sept. 11 tragedy. Everyone was thankful to be together "in the light of the uncertainty of life."

"Our family found itself all over the map on Sept. 11—in New Jersey, New York, Washington D.C., San Diego in California, and even in the neighboring American commonwealth of Puerto Rico. And it took many anxious hours before all of us were able to touch base and confirm everyone's safety," he added.

His family was fortunate, he said. There were no deaths, no injuries from the terrorist attacks. As his great aunt said grace at the dinner table, his family expressed gratitude and added a prayer for those who lost their loved ones.

### Marriage

Because he's single and the family's youngest, Ben said he was the target of a lot of ribbings during the reunion. "Much of the family's discussion at this year's Christmas gathering seemed to revolve on plans for the future. The usual questions of 'Who's going to get married next?' had an extra tinge of urgency about them."

Over a *noche buena* feast of *pansit palabok*, rib roast, lasagna and other international dishes, conversation also centered on the new travel environment.

Many expressed concern over Filipino baggage screeners in airports all over the United States. Under the Aviation Security Act recently signed into law by President George W. Bush, they stand to lose their jobs because only US citizens are qualified for the job.

Almost all of the baggage screeners in San Francisco, California, are Filipinos. Many are permanent residents (green card holders) who are still awaiting the completion of their citizenship petitions.

### Family safety

Like any other mother, Rebecca Pagsibigan is concerned over the safety of her husband Pat and her grown-up children, two of whom live out-of-state, during their holiday travels. But she does not intend to panic.

The government issued a warning of a possible terrorist attack during the Christmas holidays, based on intelligence picked up by its sophisticated eavesdropping devices.

Said Rebecca: "Others criticize the administration for issuing warnings without giving specifics on the time and place. But I consider the warnings essential, so I can be more alert and prepared. I also want to be kept informed if there are threats of air or food contamination. As an individual, I have no control over this current crisis just like the others, but I have confidence in what the Bush administration is doing."

She added that as a result of the terrorist threats, her family has a better sense of priorities. "We now focus our attention on what is more important and of value and we pay less attention to the petty ones," she said.

Ms Pagsibigan's coolness under pressure comes from her experience as an accomplished parent and academic counselor at the National-Louis University in McLean, Virginia, the state across this city's Potomac River.

Her grown-up children lead very successful lives. Ricky is vice president for strategic planning, marketing and research at the American Red Cross, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Chela, the youngest, is in Tampa, Florida. The other two, Winnie (with husband Austin) and Rissa live in Virginia.

Winnie is a senior account executive with Cort Furniture and Austin is busy with his law office. Rissa is a general manager at Corduroy's, a fine dining restaurant in Washington, D.C. She studied at the Culinary Institute of America in NY.

"I tell my children to try to move on and go back to their normal lives," Ms Pagsibigan said. "But they should also try to be more aware of unusual occurrences around them. Of course, I also do a lot of praying on their behalf."

## BAYANIHAN SPIRIT LIVES

# Midwest Pinoys make 'home away from home'

**By Ed Malaya**
*Contributor*

CHICAGO, Illinois—After 20 years of planning and fund-raisers, Michigan's Filipino-Americans finally have a place to call their own.

When the Philippine American Community Center opened in the Detroit suburban town of Southfield on Sept. 22, the 900-sq. m. facility drew the leaders of the state's 17,377 Filipinos and 51 cultural, educational and social organizations that support it. The presence of US Rep. David Bonoir, congressional minority whip, former Gov. Jim Edgar, two mayors and countless state officials affirmed the community's growing clout.

"Like most Filipinos elsewhere in the US, we are scattered all over Detroit and the suburbs. "It's great that we have this center as a gathering place," said Willy de Chavez, head of the center's Paaralang Pilipino.

The Southfield facility, which cost the community $640,000 to acquire and extensively renovate, brings to four the number of Filipino community centers in the US Midwest that own their buildings. These include the two-story Jose Rizal Center in Chicago which dates back to 1973, according to the Philippine Consulate General here.

In June last year, the Philippine House in Overland Park, Kansas, opened its doors to the delight of members of the Filipino community here. Theirs took 25 years, three bank loans and countless fund-raisers to build.

### Bayanihan spirit

"Our engineer members supervised the construction, others donated materials and many did manual labor. The *bayanihan* (mutual aid) spirit pulled us through," said Dr. Lillian Pardo, Philippine House director.

The inauguration featured *rondalla* music, *tinikling* dances, *arnis* stick fighting and a museum-quality exhibit on the Filipino *terno*.

Filipinos in Greater Cleveland in Ohio had their turn five years ago. Nestled on a spacious 2.24-hectare lot in Parma, the roomy Philippine Cultural Center cost the community some $750,000 to build. The space is multi-functional, serving as a meeting venue, exhibition space and gala ballroom. It is also occasionally used as banquet hall for weddings, christenings and debuts, which brings in additional revenue for the center's upkeep and outreach projects, said community leader and lawyer Ben Ocampo.

The 2000 US Census pegs the number of Filipino-Americans of pure Filipino descent in the Midwest's 14 states at 157,714, most of them in Illinois (86,298), Michigan (17,377), and Ohio (12,393). The total climbs to 242,955 when those claiming to be of mixed Filipino and another race are included.

"The fast-growing community in Chicagoland will probably need—in the next five to 10 years—not just one or two community centers, but perhaps three, the third one to serve residents in the south/southwest suburb," said the Chicago-based consul general, Emelinda Lee-Pineda.

### Critical mass

The Filipino communities in the Midwest's major cities have reached critical mass in terms of population, economic resources and community-organizing experience such that they are fulfilling their once cherished dream of establishing community centers.

A fifth center, the Philippine American Cultural Center, is planned for the western suburbs of Chicago to serve the growing community there. The five-year-old Philippine American Cultural Foundation, which was co-founded by Glendale Heights Mayor and former Albay native Ben Fajardo, hopes to raise $250,000 through several fund-raisers in the next two years.

The money is to go toward a down payment for a new or existing building where Filipinos can hold social, educational, sports and humanitarian activities.

### Services for seniors

Chicago is also home to the Filipino-American Social Services which delivers health services to senior citizens from a rented space downtown, and the Museum of the Filipino-American Historical Society of Chicago, which is co-chaired by Estrella Alamar and Willi Red Buhay.

The museum, which has added depth to the area's social-cultural scene, has received well-deserved praise for its Philippine History Series, which introduces youngsters to the history of their parents' country of origin, and its Cultural Connection programs with the Fields Museum and other community-based cultural institutions.

Filipinos in Milwaukee also hope to secure soon a permanent home for their Philippine Cultural and Civic Center which currently holds office at a rented place. The community in Wisconsin has raised about $150,000 in pledges for the purpose, noted P. Emraida Kiram, a community activist and a member of Sulu's Kiram royal family.

Serving Filipino servicemen and families assigned at Scott Air Force Base, near St. Louis, Missouri, is the Filipino-American Club House, which building owners Salome and Oscar Anderson had made available for free.

"Our clubhouse serves as a welcome center for newly arrived military personnel and their families," noted Marvin Chaffin, retired serviceman and head of the Filipino-American Association of Southern Illinois.

### Building a nation

Pineda said that building a community center is the most challenging project for a community as the enormous resources, long-term planning and deep resolve involved require unity and a common vision among the key players.

"The heightened awareness to provide a place where our kids can learn more about Filipino values and heritage has certainly helped," she said.

The process of nation-building may be likened to the construction of a house. Each generation takes turn in building brick-by-brick a Philippine House that should be functional, sturdy and worthy of the Filipino people's noble aspirations.

Filipinos in Chicago and the Midwest have responded admirably to this challenge through the community centers they have built.

---

*The author is a consul at the Philippine Consulate General in Chicago.*

**FILIPINO** servicemen at Scott Air Force Base near St. Louis, Missouri, and area Filipino-Americans transformed a barn into a highly functional clubhouse for Fil-Am activities. Air Force Capt. Mike Estira, organization head Marvin Chaffin and Salome Anderson (from left) stand at the clubhouse entrance.

# Jaworski files bill favoring agri lands

WHILE he is considered a "living legend" of Philippine sports, Sen. Robert Jaworski is not known to be a big fan of golf and this is evident in Senate Bill 1539, or an "Act Instituting a National Land Use Policy," which he intends to file.

In a committee report, Jaworkski described the bill as "(containing) bold moves to protect agricultural lands from wanton conversion into golf courses and other non-agricultural uses by profit-driven businessmen."

Jaworski said he would sponsor the bill, which has been consolidated into SB 1944, and defend it during floor deliberations when congressional sessions resume on Jan. 14.

Under Jaworski's proposal, prime agricultural land and specific types of land needed "for attaining self-sufficiency in rice and corn and food security" would be protected from conversion.

Also targeted for protection are all "irrigated and irrigable lands," land that could potentially be cultivated for high value crops and agricultural lands considered ecologically fragile.

The bill would help ensure the attainment of the food security and food self-sufficiency goals of the government by holding agricultural lands to their original purpose, which is the cultivation of staples and other agricultural products, Jaworski said in a statement.

Land covered by the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) will also be protected from conversion.

These include those agricultural properties under notice of compulsory acquisition or voluntary offer to sell, production or profit-sharing or commercial farm deferment of the CARP, pending the distribution and installation of the farmer-beneficiaries.

Jaworski said he was confident his colleagues' "wisdom and sense of national concern" would induce them to support the legislation.

The senator, who played professional basketball for more than two decades, said that "no amount of pressure can weaken" his resolve to get the law passed.

*Rocky Nazareno*

Ligaw Na Bala

Sa Bagong Taon,
'wag mag-paputok ng baril kahit sa itaas.
Baka ang bubong mo, o di kaya'y,
pati bungo mo'y mabutas.

Isang paalala mula sa :
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# OPINION

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# Injurious symbols

**EDITORIAL**

IN 1997-1998, 1,114 persons were injured by firecracker and fireworks explosions. Of these, 65 had to have a hand or leg amputated. In 1998-1999, 846 were injured, and of them, 58 had their limbs amputated. In 2000, 690 were injured. Stray bullets fired during the celebration of the Christmas season and New Year's Eve hit 31 in 1997-1998, 36 in 1998-1999, and 27 in 2000. Some of the victims died.

Every year it's the same story: Police and health officials warn people against exploding huge, prohibited firecrackers and other pyrotechnics and firing their guns into the air. But every year, hundreds are injured and some of them are killed, mostly by stray bullets. Some people rejoice over the statistics: they say that last year, "only" 690 were injured and "only" 27 were hit by stray bullets. But what should give them reason to rejoice is when casualties from firecracker explosions and stray bullets are reduced to an absolute zero.

We must really be a stupid, masochistic people and some of us must have suicidal or homicidal tendencies because we persist in firing guns and exploding firecrackers that have the potential TNT power to maim and kill. Can't a New Year's Eve celebration be complete without the explosion of humongous firecrackers and the firing of guns?

Gunpowder and firecrackers were invented in China. At first the firecrackers consisted of pieces of green bamboo. (The Chinese still call modern firecrackers *pao chuk* or "burst bamboo.") Then the Chinese invented gunpowder, and they made it the main ingredient of firecrackers.

The Chinese in China, being the sensible people that they are, exploded firecrackers of a limited size—about half the length and diameter of a cigarette. Or *triangulos* roughly 1-1/4 inch on each side. But once the firecrackers got to the Philippines, they went through a tremendous sea change; the pyrotechnics became bigger and more lethal. Now you have such monsters as the Shotgun, Super Lolo, Mini Dynamite, King Kong and Atomic Bomb. The names alone should give you an idea of their explosive power.

Huge, prohibited firecrackers and stray bullets mutilate fingers, tear off limbs, cause permanent injuries to other parts of the bodies and, in some cases, kill the victims. A report in 1997 said that treatment for blasted and burned body parts and the resulting tetanus infection could cost the victim as much as P17,000. This would cover 14 days' stay in the hospital and eight different kinds of medicines. The amount is roughly equivalent to a minimum wage earner's salary for three months.

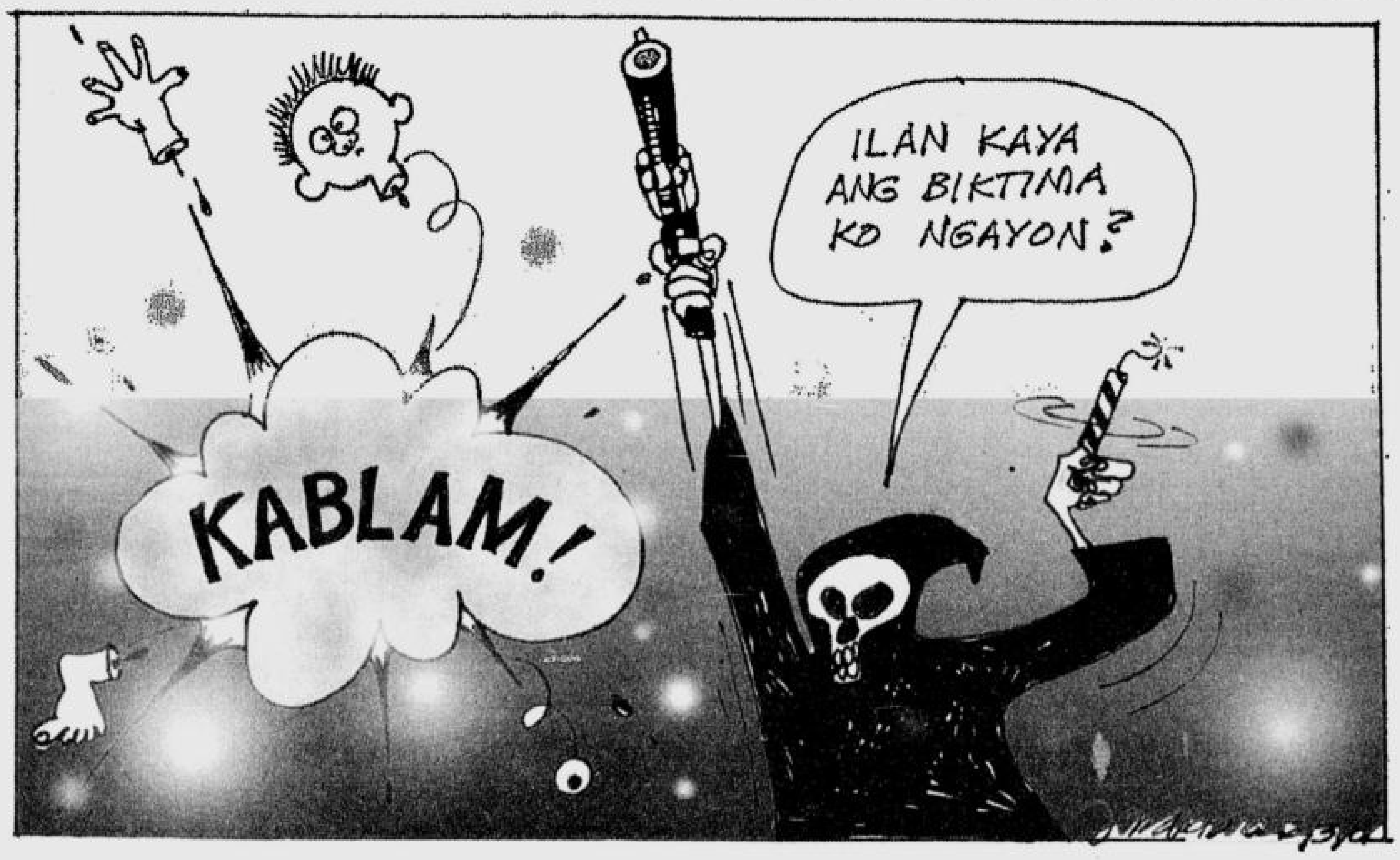
The cost in terms of manhours lost has not been computed, but it could easily run into the hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of pesos.

The people could be protected from themselves, from their own stupidity, negligence and suicidal tendencies, if only the police would strictly enforce the law. Republic Act No. 7183 specifies the kinds of pyrotechnics which may be manufactured and which may not. For instance, it is legal to manufacture *triangulos, bawang* and *labintador* of specified sizes. It is not legal to manufacture atomic big, *super lolo, super bawang* and *pla-pla,* among other firecrackers.

The police should crack down on the manufacturers of pyrotechnics which pack the wallop of a grenade or a small bomb. The police and the barangay officials also have to strictly enforce the law on those who fire their guns into the air on New Year's Eve.

The Philippines is perhaps one of the few countries, if not the only country in the world, where the casualty rate runs to the hundreds whenever the New Year comes around. On New Year's Eve it's a battleground out there. For many people, the bigger, the more lethal the firecracker, the better. The desire for a bigger bang must be a manifestation of our people's love of excess and ostentation. Or our subconscious desire to hurt ourselves.

By tradition, firecrackers are exploded to frighten away ghosts so that the new year would be free of them. They are used as symbols of getting rid of the old and welcoming the new. If only small firecrackers were used, they would be relatively harmless, if in some cases, expensive symbols. But the huge, prohibited firecrackers have become not just expensive but also destructive and, in some cases, injurious and lethal symbols. They have to go.


KABLAM!
ILAN KAYA ANG BIKTIMA KO NGAYON?

# Tonight is the most likely time for you to lose a finger

**AS I SEE IT**

*Neal H. Cruz*

HAPPY New Year to all.

Tonight is that time of the year when you are most likely to lose a finger, a toe or a hand—or even your life. And, if you are a trigger-happy gun owner, the most likely time for you to become a killer.

Tonight is that time of the year when doctors, nurses, residents, fellows and interns of hospitals will be overworked trying to save the fingers and lives of people whose crazy love affair with firecrackers turned their merrymaking into one of crying in pain. And tonight, it is almost sure, homes would be lost from fires ignited by wayward fireworks.

For New Year's Eve is that time of the year when Filipinos go crazy. They throw caution to the wind and actually court disaster by setting off fireworks to create a lot of noise. We complain against noise and air pollution but tonight we want noise—explosions, tooting horns, banging pots and pans and cans, whistles, automobile horns—the more noise, the better. When a homemade bomb explodes in a mall or a rail station, we are shocked and stay home in fear, but tonight we intentionally set off mini-bombs ourselves simply to create noise.

Why all the noise? According to tradition, it is to drive away the old year and welcome the new one. Frankly, I don't understand how the same noise can drive away one year and welcome another. Why does the same noise do different things to them?

And speaking of air pollution, after 12 midnight tonight, the whole place will look like a war zone with smoke blanketing the ground like a dog and the acrid smell of gunpowder filling the air. The smoke and the smell will remain until the morning when the first light of the new year will reveal another pollution: tons of blasted paper from firecrackers and fireworks littering the streets and yards. All because we wanted to make noise (as if we haven't had enough of the noise created by politicians).

Anyway, all that noise-making, while driving out the old year and welcoming in the new, also sends many of us in pain with blasted fingers and hands to the hospital when the firecrackers we were going to throw away exploded too soon. Or when the firecracker we thought was a dud and picked up suddenly came to life and exploded in our hands.

In the hospitals, because of so many foolish persons tonight, doctors and nurses will be overworked. They will work on the hand and fingers of a patient while a whole line of others wait in line in agony on stretchers, with more of them coming in. Ordinarily, a skillful surgeon can save a seriously blasted finger or hand through long and painstaking work. But that will take time, plenty of it. That means many of the suffering patients will have to wait a long time. To save time, money and effort, they sometimes decide to amputate. In short, this is the worst time of the year to injure your limbs.

But because you think the injury is not serious enough to take to the hospital, the end-result could be worse: death. You could contract tetanus later on and die. One of the ingredients of firecrackers is carabao or horse manure. Tetanus germs live in manure and when a firecracker blasts your skin open, the tetanus germs enter your body and breed there. The wound heals and you feel no pain and you think everything is okay. But it's not okay. The tetanus germs are multiplying inside you and when they have the numbers, they attack. Then you develop lockjaw. When that happens, you're a goner. And all because of one lousy firecracker.

So the lesson is not to take even a slight firecracker wound lightly. Go to the doctor to have tetanus shots just to make sure. Better still, keep away from firecrackers, especially the big ones. Just watch your neighbors explode their own firecrackers and burn their fireworks. That exercise is the same as burning money, for fireworks these days cost a lot of money.

If your neighbors have the same idea as you, just listen and look up at the night sky. There will be plenty of others sending up their fireworks.

And, this is important, if you have a gun, resist the impulse to show off to your neighbors by shooting your gun into the air. You think you're not going to hurt anybody by firing into the air? Wrong. Because of gravity, what goes up most come down. Those bullets you fire into the air will inevitably come down to earth and maybe hit somebody. Maybe an innocent child playing in the yard. Just think, what if that happens to your own child?

But you say nobody can trace that bullet to you. Yes, the police can. By computing the trajectory of a bullet beginning from where it hit its victim, they can determine the general area where it came from. And by gathering all the guns in that area, they can determine which guns have been fired recently. And by subjecting the guns and the bullet to ballistic tests, they can determine from which gun the bullet came from. That's foolproof evidence, better than an eyewitness account. And that's enough to send you to prison for a long time.

If you happen to see somebody firing his gun, call the police. They may not catch him, but at least the police will have a record of the persons who fired their guns in your area. That will come in handy when somebody is hit and they try to determine where the bullet came from.

So the lesson for tonight is to keep your hands away from the gun. Don't be a showoff. Your neighbors won't be impressed or scared. On the contrary, they will despise you for it. And even report you to the police and testify against you if you are tried in court.

Keep the new year happy by staying out of jail, out of the hospital and out of the cemetery.

* * *

*Comments are welcome at asiseeit@pacific.net.ph*

# Leader

**THERE'S THE RUB**

*Conrado de Quiros*

CHARLOTTE snapped their nine-game winning streak, courtesy of the absence of Richard Hamilton, who's had a coming-out party of late, but the Wizards have every reason to be happy. I'd been rooting for them, hoping they'd extend the run, but all things, as George Harrison said, must pass.

Of course, as Michael Jordan himself said rather soberly shortly after the Wizards made it nine in a row, it was too early to bring out the champagne. All they did, he said, was just make .500 of their games, having run an initial losing streak as well. True, but the Wizards have some reason to exult, and hope they will finally weave their sorcery in the NBA. The reason for all this of course is the mighty wizard himself, Jordan. He's the one who's found the right incantation to rejuvenate his bedraggled franchise.

I've seen Jordan play since he came back from retirement, and I must say I've been one of those who at first thought he made a terrible mistake in coming back. The sensation was not unlike looking at Muhammad Ali past his prime in the late '70s and early '80s taking on opponents like Leon Spinks and Larry Holmes, and being made to look very old and very tired. Or Sugar Ray Leonard coming back after a hiatus of several years, even risking his eyesight (he was suffering from a detached retina), in hopes of regaining some lost glory, and also being made to look like a fool. The greatest trick is knowing when to quit, as the wise saying goes, but the best of them are never always wise.

Three years of non-active competition had clearly taken their toll on Jordan. He looked overweight and slow. Very slow. Gone were the vaunted moves and skills. Beside the athletic Vince Carter and the contortionist Allen Iverson, he looked almost like deadwood. The old Jordan always commanded a double team at the post, sometimes even a triple or quadruple team. No team could leave him with single coverage there and not pay. The new Jordan commanded little attention, and often little respect. Most teams could cover him man-to-man (and did) and not pay much (and did not). He made bad passes, made worse turnovers, and shot worst.

His shooting pretty much lived up to the reputation of the Wizards as a team whose only conjuring trick was managing to get included in the NBA. He still wasn't afraid to shoot, as in old times, he just wasn't making them.

Above all, the intimidation factor was gone. The most intimidating heavyweight fighters would say it: they knew their opponent was gone even before the bell rang for the first round. It was in their eyes, the look, as George Foreman and Mike Tyson would put it, of a rabbit that had nowhere to run. The old Jordan had that factor too. He would look at the person guarding him, and read it in his eyes. More than that, he would look at the whole opposing team and read it in their eyes. The look of desperation, the look of resignation, the look of defeat. If the new Jordan could read anything in the eyes of his opponents, it was only the look of hunger, the look of competition, the look of challenge. Everyone wanted to take him on and see if they couldn't show him up.

But then suddenly, the wind turned. After losing several games in a row, the Wizards began to look good. The change was subtle, almost imperceptible. They didn't do much that was different, except that Jordan began making his shots, Hamilton (a kid to watch out for)—began making plays, and the whole team itself began feeling confident. I was especially impressed by the way they won against Toronto. I had thought it would be a massacre—of them—when Carter made nearly all his three-point shots during the first quarter alone, outshining Jordan in all departments, and left the Wizards biting the dust. But the Wizards didn't give up. They came storming back, behind Jordan, and ended by routing Toronto. That spoke of mettle, that spoke of character, that spoke of a new outlook for the team.

What happened in fact was that the Wizards found a leader. I suddenly realized that there was one monumental difference between boxing and basketball. Which was that boxing was an individual sport while basketball was a team one. Jordan was no longer the Jordan of old in the way he moved, the way he shot, the way he intimidated the other team. But he was the Jordan of old in the way he wanted to win. The competitive spirit was still there, the desire to take over was still there, the indomitable will was still there. In a team sport at least, that can make all the difference.

A team needs a leader. That's a commonplace liberally bandied about by sports commentators, but it's true. It's a subtle, almost imperceptible, factor but it's there, spelling the difference between winning games and losing them.

A leader, you realize with the shock of recognizing the familiar, is someone who will not think twice to make the last shot when the game is on the line. He is someone who takes responsibility for his actions, who is not afraid to take the blame when things go bad but who is not loath to credit others when things go well. A leader is someone who unleashes the potential of others, making them rise up to the best that they can be. He is someone who allows the team members to tap into their resources and dredge up qualities they do not even know they possess. A leader is someone who inspires others by his presence, his vision, his demands on his own self, bringing them to reach for things that lie beyond their grasp. He is someone who strides forward because he pushes others from behind.

I don't know how the Wizards will fare in the next few months, now that other teams are bound to take them more seriously. But they at least have a bright future ahead of them. They've just gotten something they didn't have before. They've gotten a leader. That makes all the difference in basketball.

That makes all the difference in life.

* * *

*Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com*

# A partnership that should endure

**POLITICAL TIDBITS**

*Belinda Olivares-Cunanan*

THE PARTNERSHIP between President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and former President Fidel V. Ramos shouldn't be disturbed by all the intrigues being sown between them, for the country needs that partnership to endure, if it is to help propel the nation in the turbulent times ahead.

FVR enjoys a certain stature both here and abroad (like the proverbial prophet, he is perhaps more appreciated abroad than here) and he can help GMA in many different ways as an elder statesman who had been a hands-on chief executive in his time. In playing the role of elder statesman, however, FVR is called upon to exercise the highest statesmanship; for one used to calling the shots and being so knowledgeable because of his hands-on role before, it's not easy to play the advisory role.

* * *

**On the other hand, it's not difficult to see that GMA holds FVR in high respect. For one, he's the only one she addresses as "Sir." At the golf tournament sponsored by the Alay sa Kawal Foundation at the Riviera Golf & Country Club a few months back for the benefit of the enlisted personnel, GMA drove the ceremonial ball and watching on the sidelines was FVR. As she was leaving, FVR walked her to her car and this columnist overheard her saying, "Yes Sir" a couple of times. After she left, I teased FVR about the "Yes Sir" bit, and he laughed and replied that he has tried to get her to just call her "Kuya Eddie" a number of times; once, over the phone, he again told her not to call him "Sir," and she replied, "Yes Sir, okay Sir."**

* * *

In this season of grace, it's timely to cite the book review by Evelyn Miranda-Feliciano of the 473-page memoir written by former Senate President Jovito Salonga, titled "A Journey of Struggle & Hope" and launched a few months back. The reviewer stresses that the Salonga memoir is not only about his life, "which is most inspiring and dramatic in itself," but it also provides us "an inside view of our government as it responds to situations, events and issues, especially in the recent past." She notes that the 81-year-old author's "luminous" life story, wherein he recalls his political contemporaries and "dear friends long gone" such as Gerry Roxas, Ninoy Aquino, Serging Osmeña and Genaro Magsaysay, parallels that of our own national history. For Salonga was there "providing an even keel if he could, a principled leadership if asked, an insightful wisdom and intellectual acuity in times of danger, and a principled conviction that seemed not to waver at all times."

* * *

**Salonga, said Feliciano, demonstrated that "it is still possible to be a politician and a statesman; that faith, if demonstrated faithfully in the private realm, illumines actively one's public service, and that life is one seamless whole meant to be lived for a greater cause—for others, for freedom and country." The reviewer who notes the devotion of Salonga to his wife, the former Lydia Busuego—"he mentioned her everywhere, a testament of a man who, despite his prestige, intellect and popularity remained not only true to his spouse, but gives her the importance she deserves." He is, Feliciano insists, "the man the feminist can truly love."**

**The reviewer recommends that the Salonga memoir should be read "by every evangelical Christian" not only because the author is one, but he "epitomizes for us how Christianity should be lived." The author, she says, is one who found his faith "not a hindrance at all because he lived it out consistently in his private life and in his dealings with people, in such a way that everyone looked up to him as someone principled and upright." I concur wholeheartedly.**

* * *

As we bid farewell to the old year, it's customary to remember those who have gone to the Great Beyond as well as those who have been saved from disaster. In the previous column I mourned a dear friend, Marissa Hernandez, Speaker Joe de Venecia's invaluable aide, whom death snatched in Los Angeles at Christmastime as she was with her family. But in this column I also want to celebrate the good fortune that our longtime friends, Capt. Vic Mamon (ret.), deputy administrator of Subic Freeport; his wife Biyette Kilates-Mamon and their 25-year-old son Dindy, had in surviving the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the World Trade Center in New York City.

At that time Vic and Biyette Mamon had just attended the 40th reunion of his class at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland and they flew to New York to be with their son who was training at the Citibank on Wall Street. The three of them checked into the Marriot Hotel at the WTC. That fateful morning of Sept. 11 the couple left to grab a breakfast around the corner. They saw the first airplane crashing into one tower and stood horrified at what they thought was a mere accident; but when the second plane hit, Vic knew it was something else. He told his wife to stay put in front of the Brooks Brothers building while he went back to get their son. Biyette, however, couldn't stay put, as the stream of running humanity pushed her eastward, away from the burning buildings. A short woman, she grabbed the arm of a tall black guy and told him, "Hey, I'm going with you. I'm all alone." They ran and ran until they reached a place run by a humanitarian group called "Henry St. Settlement" on East Broadway. There she was given food and blankets, and helped to reach relatives. She was able to call the hospital in Detroit where her sister, Cristina Kilates, works, and Vic's sister, Celia Mamon-Cena in Chicago, to tell them she was terribly shaken but otherwise safe.

* * *

**Vic Mamon had wanted to go back to the Marriot for his son, but by then the WTC towers were collapsing. He dove underneath a flower box and before he knew it, bodies had piled up on top of him, also seeking refuge. It was an ugly sight as body parts were flying around and the people below were covered with rubble; it was also very dark at what was to be called Ground Zero. Dindy, in the meantime, had run out of the hotel and headed for Battery Park with many others, and they were picked up by a passing ferry and taken to Staten Island across the Hudson. Vic's problem was to find his wife, and it proved lucky that the night before she had scribbled some phone numbers. About 4 p.m. Vic was able to link up with her at the settlement place and they asked a black guy to give them a lift in his battered old car up to the river, where they caught a ferry to the New Jersey apartment of Dindy. In those hours, Biyette said, "we saw the best of the American people." The Mamons lost everything they had, including travel papers, money and jewelry. Vic's brother-in-law, the Philippine consul general in San Francisco, Butch Mascardo, gave them new passports, but Vic's classmate at Annapolis, Rear Adm. Wilson Falor Flagg (ret.) and his wife were not as lucky; the Flaggs, returning home from the reunion, perished in the hijacking of the plane that crashed into the Pentagon.**

# Dignity

**KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO**

*Noralyn Mustafa*

BEING accorded, by the grace of the calendar, the gender-sensitive privilege of having the last word for the year in this column, I wanted to deserve the coincidence by writing about something nice and pleasant for a change, like how the constant rains have given us a harvest of much bigger mangosteens this year.

And how nature here celebrates the holiday season with a cornucopia of fruits Sulu has long been known for—durian, marang, rambutan and *baunuh*, that seem to appear at all the same time of year, proudly holding their own against the invasion of apples, pears, melons, mangoes and ponkanas that do somehow reach us in this lost paradise that we have yet to regain.

It may take some time. We have not even begun.

True, for the first time in decades not a shot was fired on Eid'l Fitr and Christmas, but it took battalions of soldiers and the entire police force to give us those silent nights.

It wasn't so last night when we were jolted by the deafening sound of cannons, and again as for over three decades now, the same song goes on and on in my mind, still asking the same question over and over: how many times must the cannonballs fly before they're forever banned?

"War is the same everywhere," said the Anderson patriarch (as portrayed by James Stewart) in the movie "Shenandoah." "Old men say there is a need for it; young men say there is nobility in it."

But caught between the crossfire of the need and the nobility of it are those who, like him, never had nor wanted any part in the war, but must suffer the indignities of it.

Although it resulted in the indignity of arrest for the so-called renegade leader Nurullaji Misuari, the assault on the army brigade headquarters and other military and police outposts last Nov. 19 was, for us who lived through the war of Jolo 28 years ago, a mere footnote.

Because even after three decades, like the song of Bob Dylan, it keeps being replayed, though sometimes in fragmented, even disconnected vignettes, the indignity of it all.

But there it is, the indignity of running for our lives, of losing people we loved and cared for, kin, friends and neighbors, burying them quickly devoid of rituals; seeing the emasculation of our men; looting warehouses for food; futilely searching for those arrested and coming to terms with the possibility of never finding them; healing the wounds and bruises of those beaten black and blue; witnessing the "material evidence" of our identity as a people loaded on military trucks, covered with burlap to hide the loot from us; and the ultimate indignity of watching our town die in an inferno and suddenly realizing that it had been erased from the face of the earth.

There are still many, many tales to be told, but the pain of remembering obstructs and deadens. What is important of course is to keep on remembering and to keep on telling what one remembers so that the images get seared into the consciousness, not so much as a perverse ritual of self-flagellation, but more with the hope of reaffirming a resolve not to allow it to ever happen again.

But then again, our fate lies not in our resolve, much less in the stars, but in the policies our government decides on and pursues, often in ways and terms that we cannot even comprehend.

How many policies and strategies before the body count tells them that too many people have died? How much ambivalence and ambiguity before the price of indecision is measured in blood and tears? How long before the more noble part of them haunts with the question, "Was it worth it?"

No, these are not questions borne out of whimsy. And please, let us forget at least for the moment the thing about being the present or future "food basket" of the country, although being reduced to providers of comestibles is as bad as being shelved as an afterthought in the country's march toward its perceived greatness.

The answers may not be as urgent as damage control to deflect the results of social surveys or the need to repackage one's image before media. But the questions do need to be answered; better sooner, than later.

For as we were going through the countdown in the remaining days of the calendar, our hearts truly bled at the sight of Misuari's wife on the TV screen; so young, so lovely, with her three beautiful children around her, billeted in a hotel in the city that I will always remember not for its famous twin towers built by an abundance of natural gas, but the millions of twinkling lights in all colors of the spectrum brightening up its streets every night of every year, powered by the same gas.

That truly made me rage with envy when I had to come home to this island where we have to light lamps and candles during periodic shut-off of the power for which we have to pay such a high price, and our streetlights are few and far between. But I digress.

Reports say that this determined young woman, born on the 7th of February 1974, has vowed to stay there for as long as it takes to set her husband free, and she has even applied for asylum in the United States where she hopes to reside, with her children and their father, away from all this vexation, presumably to live happily ever after.

And why shouldn't she? Anybody with the money and a stateside lawyer to make it all possible, should be allowed that much. The pursuit of happiness is a constitutional right in America.

But of course, lesser mortals like the father who, suddenly and not of his own making, is deprived of his livelihood and must stand in line for a tin of sardines and a pack of noodles for his family of five, would rage too with envy at that sight, but for the fact that he did not see it because there is no TV set in the evacuation center.

Besides, the pursuit of survival is his only right, and even that is imperiled, as the government takes its time flip-flopping on "what to do with Misuari," certain only that it is assuring him of "dignity."

When will they ever learn?

# Rizal's apostasy was world ecumenism

**COMMENTARY**

*Dean Jorge Bocobo*

POPE John XXIII, "the good Pope" as he was called, might have been proud of our Jose Rizal. They were kindred spirits, who stood for religious tolerance and understanding among all faiths and peoples. So whatever happened to Vatican II and the world ecumenical movement that held so much promise for an end to religious strife in the world? Was all that "Kumbaya" singing for nothing? The priests turned to face the people, but they still preach the same stubborn and intolerant doctrine that Catholicism is the one true faith and all others are infidels.

So, irony of ironies. Asia's only Catholic country has an excommunicated Free Mason and apostate for its national hero in Rizál. This was the man who fought the 19th century's version of the Taliban in the Philippines, not with bombs, but with something more lethal, which are, noble ideas and sentiments, delivered by the technology of Gutenberg.

He sent two B52s in the form of two novels, "Noli Me Tangere" and "El Filibusterismo," whose telling truths exploded in the hearts of his countrymen, opening their eyes to the cancer of Spanish oppression. Like bunker-busters, these powerful stories destroyed the metaphorical caves and dungeons of the friars, full of simony and injustice, into whose oblivion his people had been cast for centuries.

He was shot in the back, like a traitor, on Bagumbayan Field, on Dec. 30, 1896, at the instigation of Catholic friars, who saw in his brilliant mind and satiric pen, the dying light of the Spanish Empire, and the death knell of their centuries-old religious dictatorship. Rizal's capital crime and essential heresy was to deny the supreme Catholic vanity of being the "one true faith." Pope John was too far in the future to prevent his unjust execution.

Influenced by Miguel Morayta, a history professor at the Universidad de Madrid, Rizal joined Masonry, under the Gran Oriente de Español, adopting the Masonic name, Dimasalang. He was automatically excommunicated, expelled from the Catholic Church, a fate decreed for all Catholics becoming Masons since 1738 and reaffirmed by the CBCP in 1990. Rizal had plenty of illustrious company including Andres Bonifacio, Apolinario Mabini, Ladislao Diwa, Marcelo H. del Pilar, Juan Luna, Deodato Arellano, Graciano Lopez-Jaena, H. Pardo de Tavera, and so many others in the Propaganda Movement and La Liga Filipina. It was a Masonic trader, Jose Ramos, who first smuggled copies of the "Noli Me Tangere" into Manila.

In 1912, Rizal's family rejected a petition from the Jesuits to rebury their famous pupil. Instead, that honor was accorded to the Masons, led by Timoteo Paez, who, in full regalia, carried Rizal's remains in a long procession to the Masonic Temple in Tondo for funeral rites, before final interment at the Luneta in December 1912.

The true meaning of his life has been obscured by his enemies, who have claimed that in the end, he abjured Masonry and returned to the Faith. If he did, why was he martyred? Luckily, most of his written work (50 volumes!) has been available, since his birth centenary in 1961, despite strident opposition from the Catholic Church. In this way, Rizal may still get the final word. The tragedy is, most Filipinos have not read Rizal at all, being mainly exposed to seriously flawed films about him. (These much-awarded movies portray him at his execution, clutching rosary beads around his neck, a sop thrown in to mollify Church hierarchy.)

We treasure his two famous novels, of course. But there is also his poetry (some sophomoric, some sublime). Then there is the epistolary, or long letters, that he exchanged with Pablo Pastells, S.J., a mentor at the Ateneo. Though portions were published by Retana, the original, complete texts were suppressed and hidden by the Jesuits at a monastery in Spain for over a century. Why? The authoritative bilingual edition by Fr. Raul Bonoan, S.J. became available only in 1998, when some embargo must have lapsed, or their toxicity deemed expired. Read the letters for yourself and see if you agree with my interpretation of them, because I think they were the damning evidence of heresy and apostasy that were used at his one day trial on Dec. 26, 1896. That is why they were hidden for so long. They were used as a murder weapon.

The 1956 Rizal Law (RA 1425) of Sen. Claro M. Recto should be amended to make these letters required reading in Philippine schools. For in these letters, Rizal speaks for himself, not through fictional characters, but directly and undeniably from his heart, to all of us, in the vast audience of history, about his deepest beliefs. Even if he had, hypothetically, signed some made-up retraction document, to save his family from persecution and to marry Josephine Bracken, the letters prove he could not have done so *sincerely*. Freed from Catholic indoctrination by wide exposure to many cultures and religions, the heart and mind that one encounters in the epistolary just could not have made a genuine retraction, for he was, irreversibly, a global citizen, an ecumenical man.

Rizal believed that you can be a good and moral person without believing in a specific supernatural deity or purported representatives on earth. Of course, faith can also lead to a strong moral conscience, but religion is not the only route to virtue. Participation in an organized religion may be a *sufficient* impetus to a virtuous life, as is fear of eternal damnation, but it is not a *necessary* condition. Rizal upheld democratic tolerance and ecumenism. He rejected dogmatism and the towering vanity of a "one true faith." In so doing he found true freedom and understood the deepest meaning of democracy before it was born in his country.

That is why he chose to die an apostate, excommunicated from the Catholic Church, rather than be a traitor to himself and the future of humanity.

# Reaction of readers to news and photos

**READERS' ADVOCATE**

*Raul J. Palabrica*

IT'S the last day of the year. Depending on your point of view, it is either a welcome relief or cause for worry about next year.

Looking back, I got more letters and e-mail this year from the readers compared to last year. The news reports and feature stories on the impeachment trial and Edsa 3 riot drew the most number of reaction from the readers.

The PR agencies or "letter-writing brigades" remained in active practice. If an article put their clients in a good light, they congratulated the Inquirer for "truthful and honest reporting" and gave additional positive information about the news subject.

If the report is damaging to the reputation of their clients, they took the newspaper to task for "allowing itself to be used" by their benefactors' political opponents. They often ended their letters with a warning that they will cancel their subscription and persuade their friends to do something similar unless the newspaper treats their employers objectively (read: writes about them in a good light).

Thank God for the "delete" key, this kind of letters were easily disposed of or removed with the flick of a finger.

For legitimate letters, my response has always been prompt and immediate. Those that contained ideas or comments that justify sharing with the public were featured in my column.

Choosing the letters to write about can be tricky. Once, the writer of a letter whose contents I reproduced in my column complained that I should not have disclosed her name and e-mail address because it put her in trouble with the subject of her letter.

Another said he became the subject of "hate mail" when I discussed his letter about gays being subjects of ridicule or mockery in the newspaper's news reports and caricatures.

To avoid a repeat of these incidents, I make it a point to read the letters closely so I can find out if they want to keep their identities confidential or are willing to have their names and addresses known to the reading public.

## Telltale signs

When the letter sender specifically asks that his identity not be disclosed, I respect that request. I simply use the word "reader" and give a general description of his forwarding address.

Some readers give their true names and addresses but, at the same time, request that an alias be used instead to identify them. They want the simulated name indicated so they know that it is their letter, not those of others, that saw print in the column. I have no problem granting requests of this nature.

If some are queasy about their true names appearing in print, other readers just love to see their names. When a reader spells out in full his name, including the middle name, and indicates the contact numbers (home address, house or office telephone, cell phone and e-mail), that to me is the strongest signal that he (and probably his family, neighbors and friends) looks forward to being acknowledged as the letter sender.

Several months ago, I received letters from students of a high school in Quezon City commenting on events that were the subject of extensive news reports by the Inquirer. All of them suggested that their reaction be discussed in my column.

I learned later from a school insider that the class to which the students belong had a contest of sorts on whose letter will be featured in my column. The "winner" shall be considered the best letter and will get a prize from the teacher. Unfortunately, since I received other more interesting letters that week, no one won the prize.

The letter I found most hilarious was from a reader who stated that he is an arthritic senior citizen and that nothing would make him happier than to see his letter and name appear in the newspaper. Since his letter had good ideas, I happily obliged and featured it.

## Abrasive letters

Most of the letters I received from the readers this year were written in polite and respectful language. The readers kept their emotions or feelings in check even if the news reports they commented on (in particular, those that involved heinous crimes, graft and corruption and congressional misbehavior) would justify their going berserk or ballistic.

But the situation is different for many of the e-mail I received from Filipinos living abroad or have taken up foreign citizenship. The news reports on the impeachment trial, Abu Sayyaf kidnapping, May 1 riots and slaying of actress Nida Blanca, among others, drew abrasive and often insulting comments from them.

After berating the Inquirer for giving front-page treatment to these events, they came up with statements like "the Filipinos have become a nation of murderers," "nothing good can be expected from this God-forsaken country," or "corruption is a birthmark of every Filipino."

Their impression of the country, as expressed in their comments, is so bad that whoever gets to read their letters will feel that we live in a hell-hole from which every rational human being should make an effort to get away.

I was amazed with the kind of language they used to show their contempt for their former country. I got the feeling that if they can erase whatever identification or ties they have with the Philippines, they would have done so right after they stepped off the airplane that brought them to another country.

I reminded the Filipino-American who made the comment about our alleged murderous streak that Washington, D.C. has been branded by several international newspapers as the "murder capital of the world" and that Filipino students (unlike their American counterparts) do not go around carrying automatic weapons to kill their teachers and fellow students.

To the Filipino-British who described the May 1 riots as proof of the Filipinos' lack of discipline and respect for law and order, I pointed out that riots by Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in London occur routinely during summers, something which Filipinos are not in the habit of doing.

It is easy to ignore letters of this nature. In the absence of a request for acknowledgment, the sender would not know if I got their letters or not. I make an effort though to acknowledge their receipt or reply to them for two reasons: first, the effort taken to write the letter deserves a reciprocal gesture from my end; and second, some misguided ex-Filipinos have to be taught valuable lessons in humility and be put in their right places.

* * *

*The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.*

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LETTERS

# Much ado about polygraph machines

THE PHILIPPINE National Police and the National Bureau of Investigation have now found a vicious tool for harassment in the polygraph machine. Polygraph findings are not admissible in courts as evidence for the simple reason that they are so easy to tamper with. Any third-rate electronic technician can connect simple circuitry in the machine that will introduce aberrations in the graph that could be interpreted as failure of the test.

Polygraph machines are very useful tools in the medical profession where doctors are seeking the true conditions of their patients. It can also be a useful tool to those assessing human behavior as in persons under interrogation. In the latter case, it should be only in aid of private assessment and not proof of anything substantial. An inveterate compulsive liar could conceivably pass a test with flying colors, while a nervous and stressed witness, albeit innocent, could miserably fail.

It is utterly unfair for the PNP or the NBI to be publicly announcing a call for polygraph tests of their witnesses. If the witnesses refuse, a cloud of doubt is inevitably cast over them. If they pass the test, the NBI spokesperson would quickly add that they are by no means cleared and further investigation will be made. If they fail, public condemnation will be swift until such time as they are able to prove their innocence.

Can President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo be persuaded to take a polygraph test with Pacifico Marcelo to establish who is telling the truth on the famous August tryst? Will Sen. Panfilo Lacson accept the challenge of Ador Mawanay to a simultaneous test?

Until such time as investigative methods can be applied to the high and influential, our so-called democratic tradition precludes the application of these to the common man. The NBI and the PNP need to hone their investigative skills. Meantime, let us keep this dangerous plaything known as the polygraph machine from the hands of our law enforcers like we would keep matches away from children.—**E.P. DAKANAY JR., 43 Baltazar St., Philamlife Village, Pamplona, Las Piñas City**

## Film quality issues revisited

THE COLUMN of Conrado de Quiros on Dec. 24, titled "Survival Christmas" is illogical and out of this world.

He says, "Better still, watch all the movies in the Metro Manila Film Festival...you can be sure the movies showing in the Metro Manila Film Festival are top caliber because they have been the objects of protest lately by moral terrorists. Their quality rises in direct proportion to the vituperation the moral terrorists have thrown at them. Two movies worth watching in that respect are Joel Lamangan's 'Hubog' and Tikoy Aguiluz's 'Tatarin,'..."

We strongly protest "Hubog" and "Tatarin" because these films are ugly, defective and pure garbage.

"Hubog" is full of foul language, violence, beatings, gambling, sex, rape, molestation, nudity. Why De Quiros and company are shouting at the top of their lungs that this film is great is beyond comprehension.

Just imagine, in "Hubog" Jay Manalo punches Assunta de Rossi in the face and breadbasket to satisfy his sexual desire. In another scene, Manalo was on top of a retarded girl executing his evil intention.

These imbue the film with quality? What a cruel joke. Perhaps, if the audience were wild beasts and neurotics.

The film depicts the dark side of life. There is neither art nor entertainment. What lesson is the film driving at? It is clear and present danger if we do not know what is right and wrong.

The problem with most Filipinos is we don't study our history well, its culture and tradition. We don't have focus and direction because we are copycats.

When Steven Segal started the ponytail look, he was ruggedly handsome, determined and courageous. But those Filipinos jumping on the ponytail bandwagon are not Segals. Most of them look like monkeys.

I saw the television trailer of "Tatarin," and it is not for general patronage, yet the Movie Television Review and Classification Board allowed it. Why? It is highly questionable because it is promoting "*libog.*" How many millions of youth are heavily bombarded and demonized by this?

Let us stop disseminating distorted, mutilated ideas. False prophets are doomed to eternal damnation. We should focus on films that will inspire our people to march, fight and rebuild this nation. It's not an overnight miracle but it can be done.—**ALDO P. FILOMENO, spokesperson, Philippine Alliance Against Pornography, 45 Mahogany St., Pleasant Hill, San Jose del Monte, Bulacan**

## In a young 'balikbayan's' eyes

I AM 10 years old. My mother is Filipino and my father is English. I was born in the Philippines but have been living abroad (in various parts of the world) since I was an infant. We came home to Manila to visit my *wawa* (grandmother) and aunts, like now, during Christmas and school break. We live in Cairo, Egypt now. Like a normal kid of 10, I chat on the Net and do my homework on the computer.

On our second day after arriving here last Dec. 7, I noticed Manila has changed from the last time (15 months ago) I was here. There are so many tall buildings and some parks have been lost. But most of all, can we call the attention of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to the trash and terrible traffic that I observed all over, especially whenever our car gets stalled for hours, because traffic would not move? I see cars turning right when they are on the left side of the road. I see jeepneys stopping in the middle of the road for passengers to get in and out of the vehicle. I see policemen engaged in conversation and not managing the traffic. I see lights that are not working.

And I see garbage all over. Most of the time, I can't find any trash bin in public places. People throw paper and wrappers, even cans and bottles on the streets.—**MATTHEW LAURENCE DL. NORTHCOTT, 25 Armand Fabella, Phase 3, BF Homes, Parañaque City**

## No defense against Ronald McDonald

THIS refers to the letter of Kenneth Yang (PDI, 12/20/01) in connection with the construction of a McDonald's branch inside the church square in Balayan.

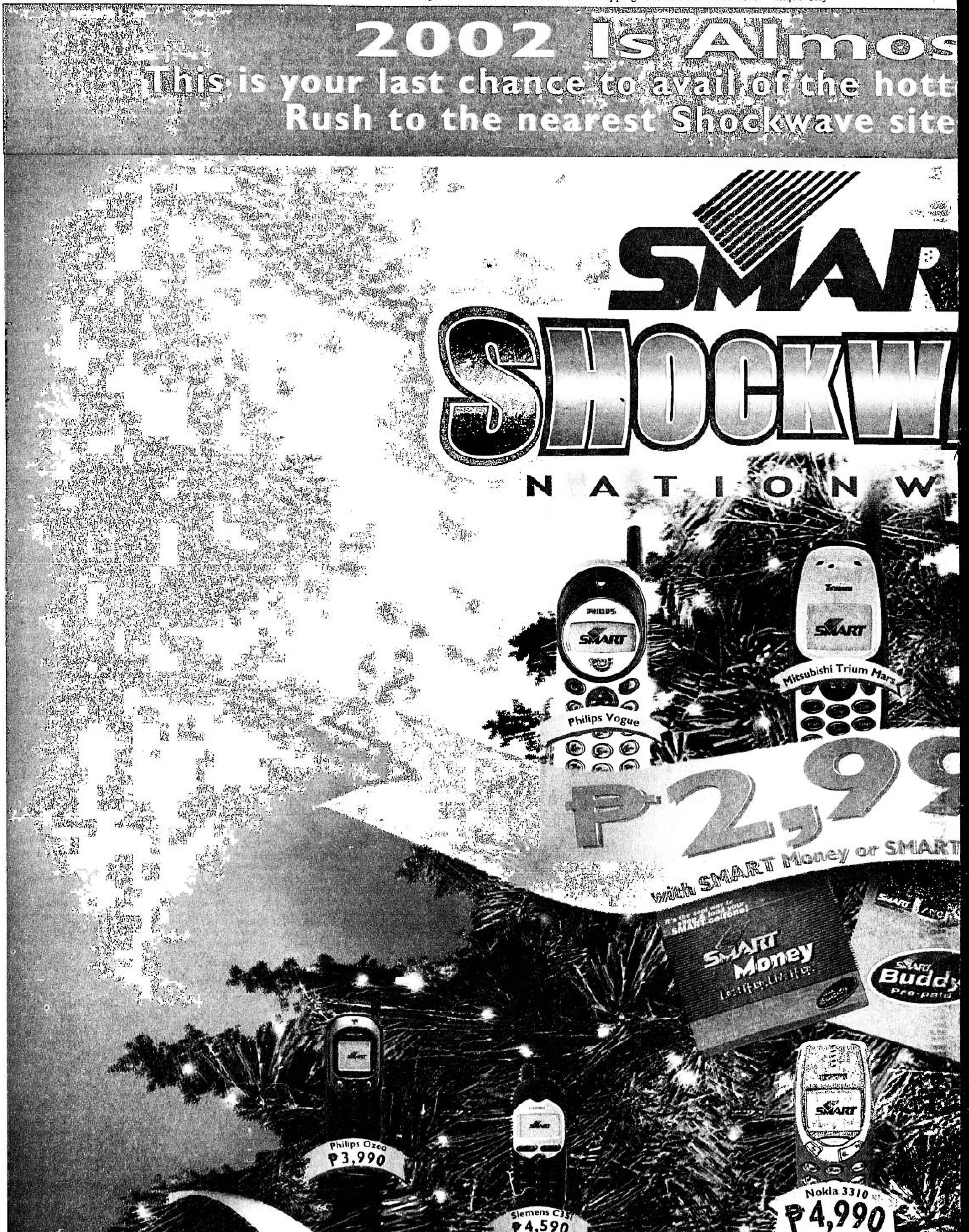
Yang, who is not from Balayan, claims "there is no encroachment on historic grounds." Obviously, he is not aware of the historical background of the churchyard where Yang is constructing, a McDonald's branch.

Those of us who are from Balayan have always called our churchyard "*kuta,*" meaning camp. It was the site of a fort that our ancestors constructed in the 18th century to defend the church and the town against frequent raids of marauding pirates.

The thick walls of the fort have since then served as the fence surrounding the churchyard. For centuries, the walls stood proud and strong, until portions were torn down in recent years to give way to a parking lot for jeepneys and tricycles.

With the construction of a McDonald's store, the historic walls of the "*kuta,*" a relic of Balayan's past, will virtually be obliterated. From an aesthetic standpoint, McDonald's will cover the view of the church from the main street approaching the town center.

How sad that the walls that were used to fight off the pirates of old do not seem strong enough today to withstand the invasion of Ronald McDonald.—**SENEN M. LAINEZ, 6th Floor, Magsaysay Center, Roxas Boulevard, Manila**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## The WORLD

LUVERNE B. GUECO, EDITOR

# Bush to India, Pakistan: Talk peace

**NEW DELHI/ISLAMABAD—President George W. Bush applied pressure on India and Pakistan to talk peace instead of war as villagers fled border areas on Sunday while more troops and tanks took up positions.**

In separate telephone calls to Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, Bush made his first personal effort to prevent a fourth conflict between the nuclear-armed neighbors.

In Pakistan, the military began thinning out troops patrolling its western border with Afghanistan in search of Osama bin Laden on Saturday as it bolstered its forces on the eastern border with India.

"We have received orders to move," one soldier said when asked why they were leaving the Afghan frontier. "You know what's going on there or what may happen," he said, apparently referring to the troop buildup on the border with India and fears of war.

India and Pakistan have reinforced their joint border with troops and equipment, including tanks, fighter jets and artillery in the biggest such build-up in almost 15 years.

Tension between the two countries has increased sharply since a Dec. 13 attack on India's parliament in which 14 people were killed, including the five assailants, and threatens to hamper the US war on terrorism in neighboring Afghanistan.

India blames two Pakistan-based guerrilla groups fighting its rule in Kashmir for the attack and says it has reached the end of its patience in dealing with what it calls cross-border terrorism. The groups have denied any involvement and Pakistan says it has arrested dozens of militants.

"The president... urged both leaders to work to reduce tensions in the region," White House spokesman Scott McClellan said.

"The president urged President Musharraf to take additional strong, decisive measures to eliminate the extremists who seek to harm India, undermine Pakistan, provoke a war between India and Pakistan and destabilize the international coalition against terrorism," McClellan said.

The tensions between India and Pakistan have presented a diplomatic problem for Washington, which has found Islamabad a crucial ally in the US war on terrorism to find and punish those behind the Sept. 11 attacks on America.

US officials have worried that pushing Musharraf to take drastic action against militant groups, who enjoy some popular support in Pakistan, could undermine his grip on power.

Daily gunfire exchanges across the line of control that separates Pakistan and Indian controlled areas have killed civilians and authorities on both sides have ordered the evacuation of some villages.

Indian police said about 50-80 percent of villagers living in several border areas of India's disputed Jammu and Kashmir state have migrated to safer places during the past week, many of them taking refuge in schools and government buildings.

Pakistan officials said on Saturday Indian army firing across the Line of Control dividing Kashmir between the two countries had forced evacuations to begin on their side.

"This is being done as a precautionary measure," said a police official in Muzaffarabad, capital of Pakistan-ruled Azad (free) Kashmir.

Eleven people including six rebels, three civilians and an Indian soldier were killed over the past 24 hours in separate gunfights across Jammu and Kashmir state, Indian police said.

On the diplomatic front, French President Jacques Chirac telephoned Vajpayee on Saturday and urged him to renew dialogue with Pakistan, a day after he had telephoned Musharraf urging the Pakistani leader to crack down on "terrorist groups."

As world leaders grow increasingly concerned, top foreign ministry officials from South Asia meet in Nepal on Sunday to prepare the ground for a summit of the region's leaders that will be dominated by tensions between India and Pakistan. *Reuters*

# At least 80 dead in Lima blaze

LIMA—At least 80 people died and more than 200 were injured on Saturday in a fire sparked by an explosion in a fireworks store in a historic district in Lima, police said.

"Approximately 80 people have died, and there are more than 200 injured in different hospitals across Lima," one police official said.

The fire was largely contained by midnight, four and a half hours after it started.

Charred bodies were piled up on debris-strewn streets in the popular shopping area as firefighters worked to extinguish the flames. Peru's chief firefighter confirmed that 60 people had died in the blaze.

"We have 440 firefighters working; this is horrible. There are some 60 dead in the road and we don't know how many more inside," chief firefighter Tulio Nicolini told reporters.

### Mourning

President Alejandro Toledo declared two days of national mourning as he rushed to Lima from a visit to northern Peru to oversee recovery efforts.

Firefighters said the fire was sparked in a fireworks store—as shoppers stocked up ahead of New Year's festivities—and had destroyed at least three buildings packed with stores.

Radio reports said numerous people trapped on rooftops by the blaze, were calling in vain for help.

"I tried to help, but unfortunately lots of people stayed to try to save their belongings and they died. I tried to enter to get a handicapped person out but it was too late to do anything," said one merchant with tears in his eyes.

### Missing

People seeking family members missing after the fire, meanwhile made emotional calls to radio stations.

Nicolini, who said it was the worst blaze he had seen in 40 years asked for assistance from firefighters from other parts of Lima due to water restrictions in the area.

Firefighters said the temperature inside the buildings could have reached at least at lea 600 degrees Celsius.

"It's a terrible disgrace. We should ban fireworks," Interior Minister Fernand Rospigliosi said from the scene.

"President Alejand Toledo deeply regre the loss of life and declares the 30th and 31 of December nation days of mourning," the government said in a statement.

The historic center of Lima, the seaside capital of about 8 million people, has been designated a world heritage area by the United Nations. *Reuters*

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**Festival Mall**, Alabang (*1/L-near Auntie Anne's*)
**Glorietta**, Makati (*Telecom Lane*)
**Greenbelt** (*Telecom Center*)
**Marikina Riverbanks Center** (*G/F, Sta. Lucia Grand Mall*)
**Robinson's Place**, Manila (*1/L, between Katya and Alexis*)
**SM Fairview** (*UGF, near Maxim's *until Dec. 26 only*)
**SM Megamall** (*5/F-TSI and 2/F Bridgeway*)
**SM North EDSA** (*G/F Carpark-TSI*)
**VirraMall**, Greenhills

**Luzon:**
**CSI, City Mall**, Dagupan (*G/F*)
**Ilocano Heroes Hall**, Laoag
**Liana's**, Calamba (*G/F Entrance*)
**Magic Mall**, Urdaneta City (*3/F*)
**Magic Star Mall**, Tarlac (*G/F Entrance*)
**NE Pacific Mall**, Cabanatuan (*G/F Atrium*)
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**Robinson's Place**, Imus (*Mall Lobby 4/F-TSI*)
**Saver's Mall**, Angeles City (*G/F*)
**SM City Pampanga** (*G/F*)
**Sunshine Mall** Baguio (*2/F*)
**Winstar SBMA**, Subic Olongapo

**Visayas:**
**SM Cebu** (*Atrium in front of Bibo*)
**SM Iloilo** (*2/F in between Surplus Shop and Jewelry Store*)
**Robinson's Bacolod** (*G/F near escalator*)
**Dynasty Square**, Tacloban (*G/F Entrance*)

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# Week-old Argentina Cabinet offers to quit after new protests

BUENOS AIRES—Argentina's new cabinet offered to quit on Saturday after new protests at the government's inability to end a long recession sparked clashes with police outside the presidential palace and looting of Congress.

Barely a week after deadly riots forced out a previous president, a dozen police were injured after using tear gas to break up what had been a peaceful protest by thousands against hated banking curbs and politicians widely seen as corrupt.

Thirty-three people were arrested as broad frustration over interim President Adolfo Rodriguez Saa's week-old government boiled over. Some protesters pounded on the doors of the presidential palace, while others broke into Congress, where they dragged out furniture and set small fires that were quickly put out as the frenzy waned shortly after dawn Saturday.

"These gangsters have got to go!" yelled one woman as she and thousands of others beat pots and pans in front of the palace in anger at a brutal recession in its fourth year and unemployment soaring over 18 percent.

Just days after being sworn in, all the ministers in Rodriguez Saa's caretaker government offered to quit following the violent protests, a government spokesperson said. It was not known if their resignations had been accepted.

Hoping to cool popular anger, Rodriguez Saa said Saturday evening that he had asked the banks to open for longer hours on Monday to allow some savers access to cash.

"(I am) very concerned about what is happening in Argentina," Rodriguez Saa told reporters at the presidential residence on the outskirts of Buenos Aires.

"I just met with bank representatives to ask them to contribute to social peace and make every effort to open on a special schedule on Monday of 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. to pay salary account holders and pensioners up to $1,000 in cash," he said.

Banking curbs introduced at the beginning of the month to stop an incipient bank run, limit cash withdrawals to $1,000 per month.

Rodriguez Saa also said finance department officials would meet with the Central Bank to ensure that all cash machines will function on Monday and said he would meet with provincial governors on Sunday to discuss the government's crisis plan.

He did not mention having received the offer from his Cabinet to resign.

US President George W. Bush called Rodriguez Saa earlier on Saturday and urged him to stabilize Latin America's third-largest economy and work with the International Monetary Fund amid worries that plans for a new currency could lead to rampant hyperinflation.

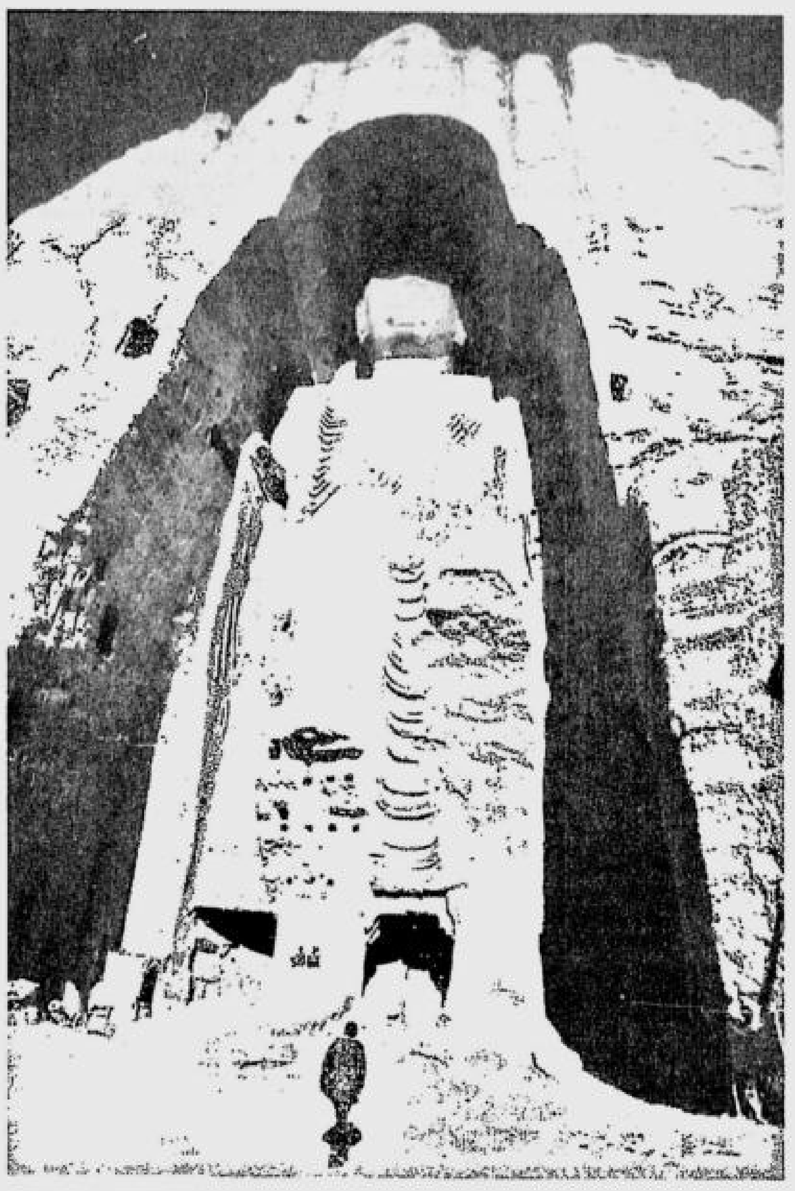
"The president emphasized the need for the Argentine government to develop a sustainable economic plan and to work closely with the IMF and other financial institutions to do so," White House spokesperson Scott McClellan told reporters.

The protests marked an abrupt end to a fleeting honeymoon for Rodriguez Saa, who stopped payments on Argentina's foreign debt after being appointed president last Sunday by Congress, which is dominated by his Peronist Party.

Carlos Grosso, chief adviser to the Cabinet but widely suspected of corruption during a stint last decade as mayor of Buenos Aires, resigned as the massive crowds outside the pink presidential palace shouted his name in disgust.

After hours of calm protest, about a dozen demonstrators hung from metal bars shielding the palace doors while others sprayed graffiti on its walls before police in riot gear broke up the crowd. Some of them then broke windows at downtown banks and shops before returning home.

"I understand the people's indignation, but these are very general accusations," said Foreign Minister Jose Vernet before entering an emergency Cabinet meeting. "I think our society is going through a very special moment." *Reuters*



**AFGHANISTAN'S** new authorities hope soon to rebuild the giant Buddha statues of Bamiyan destroyed by the Taliban, Information and Culture Minister Raheen Makhdoom said in Kabul Dec. 29. A visitor walks past the 55-meter-high Buddha statue in central Afghanistan in this Dec. 18, 1997 file photo. REUTERS

# Afghans to rebuild destroyed Buddhas

KABUL—Afghanistan's new government will restore the Bamiyan Buddhas, an emblem of culture destroyed by the Taliban regime, Minister of Culture and Information Raheen Makhdoom said Sunday.

The two giant statues, which date back some 1,800 years, were blown up the Taliban in March by a 20-day barrage of dynamite, rockets and tank shells that sparked international outrage.

"The restoration of the Buddhas is one of our top priorities," along with the revival of the media and broadcasting sector, the minister said.

Makhdoom, a specialist in Afghan culture and Sufi poetry, said the new administration would hold a seminar focusing on the statues and the restoration of the national museum which was also sacked by the Taliban.

Local and international experts would be invited to attend and help map out a plan to tackle the ambitious rebuilding projects, he said, without elaborating on how the statues might be restored.

The minister said he was waiting on "the response of Unesco" before announcing the dates of the meeting, which should be convened "as soon as possible."

The Taliban said they destroyed the giant Buddhas, the larger of which stood 55 meters tall, because the existence of statues was counter to their hardline version of Islam.

The destruction drew protests from around the world. *AFP*

# US bombers strike Taliban building

WASHINGTON—American-led forces pursued Osama bin Laden and clues to his whereabouts Saturday in a campaign President George W. Bush said involved new tactics to "rout a new kind of enemy."

Two B1-b bombers struck a complex occupied by members of the fallen Taliban leadership that had harbored Bin Laden's al-Qaida terrorists, Maj. Brad Lowell of the US Central Command said Saturday.

British and US forces joined hundreds of Afghans in the search of caves of the former al-Qaida complex near Tora Bora, looking for documents and other intelligence as well as al-Qaida that may still be hiding there.

And US troops doubled to nearly 140 the number of Taliban and al-Qaida prisoners they detained for questioning or possible prosecution. From among thousands captured by Afghan fighters, the prisoners were selected for interrogation in the hopes they will give information about Bin Laden, other terrorists or planned attacks.

In his last scheduled radio address of the year, Bush lauded progress made so far in the war on terrorism.

"The men and women of our military have successfully fought a new kind of war," he said. "They applied new tactics and new technology to rout a new kind of enemy.

The Bush administration blames Bin Laden for the Sept. 11 attacks that killed more than 3,000 people at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and in Pennsylvania.

Twelve weeks after the start of the bombing campaign in Afghanistan, the fate of bin Laden remained unknown but the subject of different reports and rumors daily.

Pakistan Prime Minister Abdul Sattar called "very far fetched speculation" the idea that bin Laden had escaped to his country.

"There is no information at the disposal of the government, not an iota of information, which should lead to the speculation that Osama bin Laden or any of his associates are on Pakistan territory, except those who tried to enter, were apprehended at the border," he said in an interview to be broadcast Sunday on CNN. Pakistan holds hundreds of such prisoners.

Meanwhile, in the first air strike since Wednesday, American forces bombed a building about 16 km from Gardez in the eastern Paktia province late Friday night, Afghan time, Lowell said.

"We've got aircraft in the sky," said Lowell. "If given the opportunity to take a target, we will do it."

The air portion of the war has wound down to only occasional strikes since Afghan fighters in conjunction with US bombing raids routed Taliban rulers and al-Qaida terrorists from most of the country.

With another transfer of prisoners Friday, America was holding 125 at a Marine-built jail at the Kandahar airport in southern Afghanistan, Lowell said Saturday from the war command center in Tampa, Florida. Eight prisoners, including American John Walker Lindh, were being held on the amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu in the Arabian Sea. Three more were at other smaller detention facilities elsewhere in Afghanistan, bringing the total to 136, Lowell said.

In addition to their possible intelligence value, some could be candidates for a US military tribunal, which Bush has authorized to judge and sentence terrorists who are not American citizens.

Also, some US Marines at the Kandahar base were planning to leave, with Army and possibly Air Force personnel expected to arrive soon to replace them, defense officials said. The Marine expeditionary units sent in to establish bases in Afghanistan have completed that mission, setting up the one in Kandahar as well as one to the south they named Camp Rhino. *AP*

# Cuba opposes US plan for prisoners at island

HAVANA—Senior Cuban officials voiced their opposition Saturday to Washington's plans for housing Taliban and al-Qaida prisoners at a US Navy base at Guantanamo Bay on the communist-run Caribbean island.

"Of course, we don't agree with this, since even though it is occupied by the Americans, this is Cuban territory," said Gen. Ramon Espinosa, head of the Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces' eastern section, which includes the Guantanamo area.

Espinosa, in rare comments to reporters, stressed, however, that the proposal to turn the US facility on Cuba's southeast tip into a detention center should not ruffle the military calm on the base's border, which is heavily guarded on both sides.

"We hope to maintain that zone as it is today, pretty quiet on both sides," he said, adding that Cuba aspired to regain control of the area one day "by peaceful means."

Another senior member of President Fidel Castro's government, Higher Education Minister Fernando Vecino Alegret, also criticized the plan to bring detainees from the conflict in Afghanistan half-way around the world to the century-old base.

"I think it would be yet another mistake by the Americans to use that usurped territory... I think there will be repudiation of that around the world," Vecino told reporters outside a special session of Cuba's National Assembly parliament.

Cuban Attorney General Juan Escalona scoffed at the proposal as "another provocation" from the Americans."

While condemning the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States, Havana has also opposed the bombardment of Afghanistan, calling it a barbaric massacre of civilians to advance imperial goals.

Castro and his ruling Communist Party have long opposed their political foe's military presence at the 116 sq km base in Guantanamo Bay, calling the installation a "dagger pointed at Cuba's heart."

The base was founded after US Marines landed at Guantanamo Bay in 1898 during the Spanish-American War and, under a 1934 treaty, can only be disbanded by mutual consent or if the US forces pull out voluntarily.

Castro has still not commented in public on the US plan, and state media have not mentioned the news. *Reuters*

# Haze shrouds Sydney as bush fires rage

SYDNEY—Thousands of firefighters battled more than 100 wildfires on Sunday as thick smoke shrouded Australia's largest city.

Acrid haze descended on Sydney's picturesque harbor and blocked out views of its famous opera house and bridge. Residents concerned about the haze flooded emergency services telephone lines.

Smoke swirled through downtown streets and was even trapped inside shopping malls and office buildings. At the headquarters of the national broadcaster, ABC, smoke also set off fire alarms and forced an evacuation.

With visibility poor, some jetliners were diverted from landing at Sydney Airport, although the airport continued to operate partially.

The bush fires have raged around Sydney and other parts of New South Wales state for more than a week. Authorities said about half have been deliberately lit. Six people have been arrested.

On Saturday night, high temperatures and dry winds that have fanned the blazes eased temporarily and stars could be seen twinkling in the sky for the first time in days. The moon lost its red-orange glow as a breeze pushed the fires, burning just 25 km from Sydney, back on themselves.

However, officials said that southern hemisphere temperatures could climb beyond 38 degrees Celsius later Sunday, heightening the fire threat.

New South Wales Premier Bob Carr told Australian Broadcasting Corp. radio that Sunday could be "one of the most potentially dangerous days we've ever faced as a community."

State fire chief Phil Koperberg urged communities along the 600 km fire front to remain calm.

"The weather for the next 36 hours is not conducive to effective containment," Koperberg said.

More than 150 homes have been destroyed, more than 4,400 people evacuated and thousands of acres of forest and private land scorched. No deaths have been reported. Insurance officials estimate damages at more than (Australian) $50 million.

About 15,000 firefighters used the respite to make firebreaks and carry out controlled burns in forests and around threatened homes.

The most dangerous fires are burning along the city's southwest boundary and in the Blue Mountains national park 80 km west of Sydney.

Firefighters there said visibility on Sunday was less than 100 meters, hampering efforts to locate and control fires in the regions heavily forested and rugged terrain.

Tinder-dry national parks were closed. Wildlife officials estimated that thousands of animals have died or have been injured, but warned it is too dangerous to try to rescue them.

**A FISHERMAN** is silhouetted against the smoke-shrouded Sydney Opera House as Australia's largest city is engulfed in a blanket of smoke from bushfires burning on the city's outskirts Dec. 30. REUTERS

"Larger mammals, such as wallabies, kangaroos and koalas, are most risk because they cannot move fast enough to escape fire," said Julie Barnes, a veterinarian at Sydney's Taronga Park Zoo.

"Smaller creatures such as reptiles and insects would have burned."

Nearly 80 percent of the 16,000-hectare Royal National Park in Sydney's south has been blackened. It is the world's second-oldest national park after Yellowstone.

Australia's forests are dominated by eucalyptus and other oil-based trees that burn easily but regenerate quickly after fires. *AP*

# Palestinians call on peace envoy to return

JERUSALEM—Palestinian leaders are trying to persuade the United States to take advantage of a rare lull in the fighting and renew its mediation in the Middle East by sending special US envoy Anthony Zinni back to the region.

However, in a reminder of the undercurrent of boiling tensions, a heavily armed Islamic Jihad militant and would-be suicide attacker was shot dead by an Israeli patrol in the northern Gaza Strip and his body found on Friday.

The incident may have been Jihad's first violation of its recent promise, along with its larger rival Hamas, to temporarily halt attacks against Israeli targets to prevent further clashes with Palestinian security forces.

Some 500 people gathered for his funeral on Saturday near Gaza City, and some Jihad supporters said the militant group would continue to attack Israel.

Separately, Palestinian security sources said they had arrested three Jihad members in Gaza City Saturday, while Jihad said three other members were arrested late the previous night.

A statement by the Palestinian leadership called for a "quick return of Zinni and his team to proceed to the application of the Mitchell plan and the Tenet memorandum."

The Mitchell plan calls for an end to violence and the implementation of confidence-building measures, then a return to peace talks.

The Tenet plan is a blueprint for implementing a ceasefire.

Israeli Defense Minister Binyamin Ben Eliezer said Saturday night that the Palestinians were on the right path toward implementation of the Mitchell plan.

"If the Palestinians continue their arrests and foiling attacks, I think we will enter into the Mitchell agreements," he said in an interview on private television. *AFP*

# India seen having military edge over Pakistan

WASHINGTON—India enjoys a strong numerical advantage over Pakistan in both conventional and nuclear weapons, giving it an edge in its current confrontation with its perennial foe, according to data released by a leading US think tank.

But a prominent US expert on South Asia also warned Saturday that the roughly two-to-one military advantage of the Indian armed forces makes it more likely that a cornered Islamabad could lash out with a nuclear strike.

"If you had a full war between India and Pakistan, not just skirmishes on the border... India would start winning," said former US ambassador Dennis Kux, who has served in both India and Pakistan.

"And at a certain point Pakistan, rather than going under, would push the button," he said, appearing on CNN's "The Capital Gang" show.

According to a report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, India, whose population exceeds one billion, has more than 1.2 million soldiers on active duty compared to Pakistan's 620,000.

A similar advantage is observed in practically all major conventional weapons category, the survey showed.

New Delhi's arsenal includes 3,414 main battle tanks and 1,540 light tanks, while Islamabad's heavy armor is limited to a total of 2,300 pieces.

At a time when the US military campaign in Afghanistan has demonstrated the new strength of air power, India appears better positioned to achieve superiority in the sky, if its current tensions with Pakistan were ever to boil over into a shooting war.

Its air bases house a total of 738 combat aircraft while Pakistan's house just 353, according to CSIS.

New Delhi also has nearly a fivefold advantage in transport aircraft and a six-fold one in combat helicopters, which, as events in Afghanistan have shown, can inflict devastating damage on ground troops.

In addition, India has 37 Naval aircraft compared to Pakistan's five, the reported indicated.

Islamabad has an advantage only in self-propelled artillery, being able to field 240 pieces compared to India's 180.

But it loses out in towed artillery where New Delhi has a 4,175-to-1,467 advantage, the data showed.

Kux said geography also favored India because an armored blitz across arid Punjab province toward the Afghan border could cut off Islamabad, the capital, from Sindh, the country's economic powerhouse and its main port of Karachi.

"India could just cut across the middle of Pakistan," said the former diplomat. "In the desert, it should be fairly easy to do."

On Saturday, Pakistani Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar made clear Islamabad did not favor any kind of war with India but refused to rule out a nuclear option.

"If war is imposed, then contingencies can arise, and I would hate to think of those contingencies," he said.

But US experts believe that even in an exchange of nuclear strikes, India, while suffering tremendous losses, could have an advantage.

Although no reliable official data is available, it is estimated that New Delhi has 400 kg of weapons-usable plutonium, according to the CSIS report.

Since it takes about six kilogram of plutonium to manufacture a nuclear bomb, the amount would be sufficient to produce some 65 bombs if old technologies are used, or 90 bombs employing more advanced methods.

By contrast, Pakistan is believed to have more than 200 kg of weapons-grade uranium, which is enough to construct 15 to 25 nuclear weapons, the report said. *AFP*

Northern Luzon Bureau
Room 201, Bonuan Apartelle
10 Happy Glen Loop, Baguio City
Tel. No. (074) 443-9255
Fax No. (074) 443-8971
E-mail: inq_baguio@inquirer.com.ph

Southern Luzon Bureau
23 Aurora St., Old Albay District
Legazpi City
Tel. No. (052) 820-8402
Fax No. (052) 820-1274
E-mail: inq_bicol@inquirer.com.ph

# Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

Visayas Bureau
c/o Cebu Daily News
18-15 Escario St., Cebu City
Tel. Nos. (032) 233-0346/233-0349
Fax No. (032) 232-9938
E-mail: pdivis@skyinet.net

Mindanao Bureau
FEP Printing Corp. Bldg.
Ma-a Road, Davao City
Tel. Nos. (082) 244-1770 to 71
Fax no. (082) 2441771
E-mail: pdiminda@dv.weblinq.com

## WEATHER FORECAST

**FORECAST:** Visayas and Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers

SOURCE: PAGASA

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Metro Manila** | Partly Cloudy | HI 31° Lo 19° |
| **Baguio** | Partly Cloudy | HI 22° Lo 11° |
| **Tuguegarao** | Partly Cloudy | HI 24° Lo 16° |
| **Laoag** | Partly Cloudy | HI 34° Lo 16° |
| **Clark Zone** | Partly Cloudy | HI 30° Lo 18° |
| **Tagaytay** | Partly Cloudy | HI 28° Lo 16° |
| **Legazpi** | Partly Cloudy | HI 29° Lo 23° |
| **Calapan** | Partly Cloudy | HI 29° Lo 19° |
| **Bacolod** | Cloudy with Rains | HI 29° Lo 22° |
| **Roxas** | Cloudy with Rains | HI 29° Lo 24° |
| **Cebu** | Cloudy with Rains | HI 30° Lo 23° |
| **Tacloban** | Cloudy with Rains | HI 29° Lo 22° |
| **Gen. Santos** | Cloudy with Rains | HI 34° Lo 23° |
| **Zamboanga** | Cloudy with Rains | HI 32° Lo 24° |
| **Cagayan de Oro** | Cloudy with Rains | HI 30° Lo 22° |
| **Davao** | Cloudy with Rains | HI 32° Lo 23° |

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/11/02/01

## ROUNDUP

### 50 firecracker stalls burned

TAGUM CITY—Some 50 firecracker stalls at the Tagum Trade and Cultural Center here turned to ashes when an ignited firecracker triggered an explosion Saturday afternoon. Most of the stalls were owned by Muslim traders, some of them coming from Davao City who had to sell their firecrackers there after Mayor Rodrigo Duterte banned the selling of these explosives in his city. Reports said two men bought firecrackers but asked for a sample to test. The five-star firecracker they lit sparked and immediately spread to the stalls. Within 10 minutes, 50 stalls were razed just before Tagum firefighters arrived to control the fire. A Honda Dream motorcycle owned by a Turkish trader was also burned down. Tagum Mayor Gelacio Gementiza immediately ordered the owners of the remaining 10 firecracker stalls to transfer to another place to avoid another fire.

*Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

### Brothers burn in blast

BACOLOD CITY—Two brothers were severely burned in a firecracker blast Thursday in Sitio Raming, Barangay Pilar, Hinigaran, Negros Occidental, 60.3 kilometers south of this city. The victims—Ronnie, 20, and Agustin Nunal, 18-—sustained third degree burns in different parts of their bodies. Police said the two were hurt in an explosion that occurred while they were disposing of firecracker wicks and garbage with gunpowder residue in a canefield outside the house of their employer, Reynaldo Norbe, a licensed dealer of firecrackers and pyrotechnics.

*Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

### Doc's alert on pyrotechnics

NAGA CITY—A government doctor here has warned the public to be careful with firecrackers not only because of possible injury but also of tetanus that may be caused by it. Dr. Edgar Esplana, Bicol Medical Center director, said that unknown to many, the firecrackers being sold have cow or carabao dung as one of the ingredients. Esplana said local makers of firecrackers believe that animal dung could increase their firepower and explosion. He said that with the animal dung, even minor injuries should be cleaned and treated well because of the danger of tetanus.

*Juan Escandor, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

### Jeepney catches fire

DAVAO CITY—A passenger jeepney caught fire while it was being refueled at a gasoline station in Agdao District here Thursday night. Its driver, Jimmy Langwas, said he was connecting a gas hose into his jeepney when he noticed the fire. But some witnesses said they saw a lighted cigarette that could have caught the wet flooring and spread through the vehicle. Langwas, however, denied he was smoking at that time. Two fire extinguishers were used to put off the fire but to no avail.

*Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

### 2 killed in drinking session

SAMPALOC, Quezon—Two persons were killed and one was seriously wounded after a post-Christmas drinking session Wednesday evening turned into a bloody ending in Barangay Bayongon here. Police identified the fatalities as Rex Bajar and Wilfredo Paleracio. Wounded was a certain Roel Chavez, a resident of the village. Investigation revealed that the three were drinking and had an argument. Bajar and Paleracio were died of multiple stab wounds in different parts of their bodies.

*Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

### Another X'mas day death

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Another injured victim in the Christmas Day road tragedy in Polomolok, South Cotabato succumbed to severe head injuries on Thursday morning, 38 hours after she was confined at the General Santos Doctors' Hospital. The death of Cristina Sabalo, 37, of Barangay San Roque, Koronadal City, brought to 15 the death toll in what was considered the bloodiest Christmas Day road mishap in the South Cotabato-Sarangani-General Santos (Socsargen) area. Cristina's husband Nestor and their children, Clinton, Carmela and Christian, were also killed in the accident. They were among the passengers of an ill-fated van that was slammed by a speeding Yellow Bus Line.

*Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

### Help for war kids

THE ROYAL Danish Embassy in Manila is supporting the on-going peace and development program in Mindanao of the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) by funding the psycho-social rehabilitation of children traumatized by violence in Mindanao's conflict areas. The two-year rehabilitation program for predominantly Muslim children is being funded by a P15-million grant from the Royal Danish Embassy to PBSP and its project partner, Dr. June Pagaduan Lopez of the UP College of Medicine.

## CL cops hot on tracks of al-Qaida members

BY TONETTE OREJAS
*PDI Central Luzon Desk*

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—Central Luzon policemen are hot on the tracks of members of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida terrorist cell in the Philippines following the arrest of a suspected Jordanian terrorist on Thursday in Bataan.

Chief Supt. Reynaldo Berroya, Central Luzon police chief, withheld information on the activities, identities and nationalities of "several men" suspected to have links with bin Laden, the prime suspect in the Sept. 11 terror attacks in the United States.

"We are hot on their tracks. We are investigating their activities," Berroya said of the cohorts of Jordanian businessman Hadi Yousef Alghoul.

In a raid on Thursday night, intelligence operatives found 281 sticks of dynamite in the ceiling of Alghoul's apartment in Barcarse Subdivision in Barangay Cupang North, Balanga City.

Berroya said the explosives were planned to be used in a series of bombings in Metro Manila next week.

Alghoul was charged with illegal possession of explosives before the regional trial court in Balanga City on Friday. He remained locked at the Balanga City jail after he was unable to post a P200,000-bail.

The Jordanian, together with his Filipino wife, sells underwear in a small stall at the Remar Market in Balanga. However, police investigations showed that he withdrew huge amounts of money every Thursday during the last four months that he was under surveillance.

Alghoul might stay in jail until Jan. 2 because the court is closed for the holidays, Berroya said.

Alghoul, according to Berroya, is an illegal alien, having been unable to show legitimate migrant documents during his arrest.

Policemen have coordinated with the Bureau of Immigration on Alghoul's status in the country and his supposed links with the al-Qaida network.

Berroya said he was discouraging the deportation of Alghoul.

"I want him to face charges in the country," he said.

Alghoul, who was presented to reporters in Camp Olivas in Pampanga on Friday, claimed he was "framed up."

He and his wife denied hiding explosives in their apartment.

Berroya, former intelligence chief of the Philippine National Police, laughed off Alghoul's claim.

Barangay officials, he emphasized, witnessed the raid and helped the raiding team at 10:30 p.m. Thursday.

"It will be counter-productive on his part to deny (the charges). The (pieces of) evidence against him are glaring," he added.

Policemen also found in Alghoul's possession 35 sheets of documents written in Arabic. Several Taliban poems, written in English and urging to take up arms against the US, were also found in the three travel bags purportedly seized from Alghoul.

Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo could not say yet if Alghoul is on the BI's list of suspected or confirmed terrorists.

"I'm not sure yet if he is on the BI list. I have no one in the office to run a computer check," Domingo said in a cellular phone text message sent to this correspondent on Saturday.

## Optional military training approved

NAGA CITY—The bicameral committee has approved and submitted to President Macapagal-Arroyo for signature the bill that would make military training optional to all college students, a Bicolano lawmaker told the INQUIRER.

Camarines Sur Rep. Sulpicio Roco Jr., one of the authors of the bill in the Lower House, said yesterday that both houses of Congress agreed that military training would be a student prerogative.

Roco said other options under the approved Bicameral Bill on National Training Program are literacy and civic action programs, from which any college student could choose aside from the military training program.

He said the bicameral committee opted to change the present obligatory military training for male college students because it becomes unproductive when one is not inclined to a military career.

Roco said the present military training adopted in most tertiary schools was just drills and has nothing to do with the study of military science.

He added that once President Macapagal-Arroyo approves and signs the bill into law, a real military training program with emphasis on military science would be adopted.

Roco said the training would be a one-year period of six hours' training every weekend.

He said the other two options involves community integration where the students are required to conduct civic action and literacy classes in the communities for six hours every weekend. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

## GMA pushes Chinese hybrid rice

BY VINCENT CABREZA
*PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

BAGUIO CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo's formula for food security next year is a hybrid stock of Chinese rice seeds to double domestic supply, plus P700 million in calculated interest dividends she still has to recover from the coconut levy account, which is being disputed before the Supreme Court.

Ms Macapagal offered her solutions to the public in the second of a three-part economic report she telecast on Saturday in her weekly program, "May Gloria ang Bukas Mo" at the Presidential Mansion here.

The President said she was very keen about retrieving the coco levy dividends to help stabilize coconut prices and start up long dormant agricultural projects that were sidelined by the government deficit.

Ms Macapagal explained that the controversial $540-million deal between San Miguel Corp. and Japanese brewer Kirin Co. Ltd. could not impact on the dividends, despite fears raised by farmers that the corporate merger would influence how some P50-billion in idle coco levy assets will be used.

She added that the government is now prepared to look into the coco levy's book of accounts to track down these dividends.

But the oversight committee of the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act (Afma), which met in this city early this month, concluded that the real problem of Philippine agriculture may be the "ghost budgets" for farm safety net subsidies and bad political judgment calls. These can be traced back to Ms Macapagal herself, they said.

Agriculture Undersecretary Ernesto Ordoñez told committee chair Sen. Manuel Villar that previous administrations documented budgetary allocations for Afma projects, when government actually referred to outlays issued as loans by government financial institutions like the Land Bank of the Philippines.

"This meant that no money is actually flowing to Afma from government, because budget managers point to the money in the banks," he explained to the committee that includes former LBP chair, Tarlac Rep. Jesli Lapus.

"I told (Montemayor) that whatever it is we are doing in agriculture is wrong. In the past 20 or 30 years, we've been doing the same things . . . I doubt if we accomplished anything. Right now our agriculture is dependent on the weather. This (policy) must change if we are to improve the domestic economy. It is time for radical approaches," Villar said during the Afma review.

But Ms Macapagal stressed here that a Chinese rice hybrid would be a solution to Filipino farmers' subservience to the weather.

She said the hybrid expects to yield two and a half times more of the country's routine production.

DA forecasts last year anticipated actual rice sufficiency by this year, with a projected 13.5-million metric ton harvest from farmers.

The country's grains harvest report documented a 5.5-percent growth rate in the third quarter of 2000, DA statistics indicated.

The same report expected farmers to harvest 12.4 million metric tons of rice by 2000, missing the national sufficiency mark by only 1.1 million metric tons.

Ms Macapagal guaranteed that next year's Afma allocation had been duly covered by the 2002 General Appropriations Act and delayed irrigation programs are already being accessed to prepare the country for an impending El Niño phenomenon.

WESTERN VISAYAS

## Insurgency grew as economy slumped

BY HAZEL VILLA, MA. DIOSA LABISTE AND NESTOR BURGOS JR.
*PDI Visayas Bureau*

(*Second of three parts*)

ILOILO CITY—The economy of Western Visayas, just like that of Central Visayas, was also "significantly affected by the slump in the world economy due to fear of terrorism," according to a third quarter report by the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda).

YEAR-ENDER

Severely affected were the tourism industry and local business firms. Few investments were made in the region as indicated by the slowdown in business registrations with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The Neda reported that the "usual trend of high unemployment rate in the urban areas has somewhat slowed down" and that the "regional underemployment situation has improved" compared to the same quarter last year.

The Department of Labor and Employment, however, reported that 3,506 employees in Western Visayas lost their jobs due to the shutdowns and retrenchments of establishments.

As of end-September, 35 of the 250 SEC-registered firms in the region have shut down while 84 have retrenched, the DOLE said. Most of these were in Negros Occidental and Iloilo.

### Tourism down

Those that closed shop or retrenched were engaged in the wholesale and retail trade as well as in community, social and personal services.

"Closures and retrenchments were due to economic/financial problems affecting the establishments," said the Neda, adding that the number of firms registered with the SEC likewise decreased by 35.6 percent compared to the same quarter last year.

Based on the report of 45 percent of firms accredited by the Department of Tourism, tourist arrivals during the third quarter of 2001 decreased by 56.6 percent (from 170,113 to 73,788) compared to the second quarter of the same year.

The third quarter of the year falls on the rainy season that is considered off-season for both local and foreign tourists in the region, the Neda explained.

The slump was also triggered by the peace and order problem in some areas of the Philippines that prompted some countries to issue advisories to their citizens against visiting the country.

**SOLDIERS** continue to scour the Visayas countryside to fight an insurgency that refuses to be licked.

CHARLIE SACEDA

"Added to this (advisories) were the bombings of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in the United States which made foreign tourists postpone their travels for fear of being trapped in a country not their own," the Neda reported.

### Investments

The investments recorded at the SEC amounted to P1.7 million or 37.55 percent lower compared to the previous quarter. Compared to the same quarter last year, however, a 54-percent increase was recorded, reported the Neda.

Almost all farm crops experienced a "downtrend" during the third quarter except for corn.

Palay production for the third quarter had a 10-percent decrease over last year's produce while coconut production decreased by 4.2 percent.

In Guimaras, mango production decreased by 1.39 percent compared to the same quarter last year. Some mango trees that were sprayed with inducer did not bear fruits due to the rain, the Neda said.

The regional Bureau of Agricultural Statistics reported that commercial fishery for the third quarter decreased by 13.4 percent compared to the previous year.

A slight increase equivalent to 3.1 percent was achieved in municipal fishery. The aquaculture industry, likewise, experienced a positive growth of 21.8 percent compared to the same quarter last year, the BAS reported.

Livestock and poultry production had a good showing during the third quarter with an increase of 130.5 percent and 51.5 percent respectively, compared to the same quarter last year.

The Neda said the introduction of "long holidays" is expected to spur the local economy, especially in the tourism sector.

"The resolution of the Afghan conflict and the arrest of suspected global terrorists may restore economic activities worldwide. The region may be able to reap some windfall from this development," said the Neda.

### Headache

In the peace and order front, insurgency returned as the big headache of civil and military authorities in Western Visayas this year.

The Communist Party of the Philippines and its military arm, the New People's Army, is the single threat to the region's security, the military said.

Armed guerrillas have infiltrated 203 barangays and influenced 17 in Iloilo, Negros Occidental, Antique, Aklan, Capiz and Guimaras.

In a briefing last month, Chief Supt. Rolando Garcia, police regional director in Western Visayas, said the number of insurgency-affected barangays rose by some 300 percent. The presence of insurgents was felt in 220 of the 4,048 barangays. The figure rose by 172 or 358 percent from last year.

Garcia predicted that CPP-NPA activities will step up next year even as peace talks take place.

The police has contained the possible threat from another armed group, the Revolutionary Proletarian Army–Alex Boncayao Brigade that signed a peace pact with the government last year. However, the PNP has been criticized for allowing the RPA-ABB to do police work when its members have been committing human rights abuses.

In Janiuay, Iloilo, local government officials have asked, in October, the PNP to clarify the status of the RPA-ABB because its members were accused of getting a share in the quarry business revenues in the town.

In the first half of the year, there were 20 armed clashes between the government troops and the two armed groups. One of such Army and PNP-initiated encounters bagged Reynaldo Bocala, a ranking rebel-leader in Panay early this year.

### Growing animosity

The animosity between the CPP-NPA and the RPA-ABB in Panay reached a new level after the death of Rowena Marie Torrato, who was reportedly killed by a raid conducted by RPA-ABB elements in Sebaste, Antique. While the two groups tried to avoid engaging each other in armed clashes, Torrato's death changed all that as both camps now consider each other possible targets of attacks.

Charges of human rights violations between the CPP-NPA and the government have been kept to a minimal, with both sides trying to avoid being tagged a violator of human rights.

Human rights groups, however, foresee more abuses if more troops arrive in Panay Island. An Army official said more troops are needed in that area because of the increase in the number of insurgency-affected barangays. Col. Jeffrey Sodusta, commanding officer of Task Force Panay, said more troops will easily contain the rebel threat.

Instead of sending the 31st Reconnaissance Company to Basilan to run after the Abu Sayyaf, the Army decided to keep them in the island after CPP-NPA guerrillas burned P7 million worth of construction equipment owned by F.F. Cruz and Co. in Antique last September.

Recruitment for the Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Units was also made.

Samuel Jaco, secretary general of Karapatan in Panay stressed that more jobs, food and land could help end insurgency rather than more troops.

But the slump in food production presents a bleak picture as the year ended, he said. Food shortage could lead to restiveness and petty crimes.

# Has GMA kept her (Sona) promises?

(From page A1)

Authority (NFA), the lead agency tasked by the President to implement the promise.

Cora Nellas, a customer of Gloria Labandera rolling store inside Camp Aguinaldo, said the rice sold at the rolling store is really cheap at P14 per kilo. She said the quality of rice is almost the same as that of an P18-20 rice sold at the public market but that one has to wash the rice twice to remove its dark color. She added that she wished rolling stores would visit Camp Aguinaldo daily.

Rolling stores make their rounds only on Mondays and Fridays, according to the NFA.

Mr. Eduardo Gaa, a canteen manager, agreed that the rice sold at the rolling store is really cheaper compared with the price in the market. But he has one complaint, "But we are limited to buying only three kilos per person." He wished for the limit to be lifted.

There are others who are not aware of the rolling stores. PDI Research asked several residents inside Camps Aguinaldo and Crame. Based on their reactions, it seemed that only a few know of the presence of rolling stores in the camps. They said that most of the residents there have not yet in fact seen any GMA rolling store.

Regular customers interviewed by PDI Research had no idea as to the stores' schedule and location.

Nellas and Gaa said that they bought from the rolling stores only when they chanced upon them.

The NFA has tapped the assistance of local government units, non-government organizations, cooperatives, labor unions and factories as their partners in this project.

Ric Rostata, an assistant head from GMA Coordination Center in NFA, admitted that 1,000 rolling stores are not enough to cater to the poor Filipino families. He defended, however, that the stores allow the government through the NFA to stabilize the price of rice. A total of 965 rolling stores are under the care of NFA partners while the rest are NFA-operated. Since its inception last July, the sales from rice sold totaled P664,219,804; for sugar, P21,899,801; for groceries, P5,152,434.59. The NFA said that the project has so far benefited 2,642,178 people.

About 18 percent or a total of 227 rolling stores are deployed in the National Capital Region. From these, 172 are operated by the partners of the NFA. The local government units are the most active partners of NFA in this region followed by the cooperatives.

Northern and Central Mindanao have the least number of rolling stores with only 22 and 26 mobile stores, respectively, to cover the vastness of their areas. Six mobile stores in Northern Mindanao and three in Central Mindanao are fully NFA-operated.

The NFA still needed 425 units as of end-November to reach its year-end target of 1,000. It vowed to accomplish the goal it committed to Ms Macapagal despite encountering some difficulties. It cited lack of funds, non-availability of vans and lack of NGOs or organizations willing to become NFA partners as some of the common problems.

### Remove rice import monopoly

During her Sona, Ms Macapagal promised to lift this rice importation monopoly of NFA by January 2002 to allow farmers groups to import rice of both "high-end" and "low-end" varieties.

Only the NFA, as provided for by Presidential Decree No. 4, has the exclusive authority to import rice in the country. This has always been the government policy.

In 1998, however, the policy was relaxed. The private sector was allowed to participate in the importation, but subject to certain conditions.

Aside from the quantitative restrictions that imported rice is subject to, the private sector is only allowed to import premium, fancy and glutinous varieties or the "high-end" types. This is to avoid conflict with the NFA which, in turn, imports the "low-end" varieties.

Farmers themselves have been adversely affected by rice importation. The lifting is envisioned to allow farmers to partake of the benefits of procuring rice abroad.

NFA consultations with the farmers showed that the latter's concern centered mainly on their lack of preparation and ability to import rice. But they agreed that with the suppressed world price of rice, they could profit from this venture. They also wanted what they called "Rice Development Fund" where tariff payments shall be deposited and made available exclusively for their use.

The government has accepted the suggestion of a "Fund" and included it in its proposal. They also included the government-owned Landbank and Quedancor in the program to serve as financing agencies for the credit needs of the farmers. Entrepreneurial training seminars, which have been going on even before this proposal, are also available to farmers.

Awaiting approval are the guidelines on the lifting of the importation, which are now with the NFA Council composed of agencies including the DA, DTI, Neda, DBM and government financial institutions.

### Abu Sayyaf

In her Sona, the President pledged to rescue the hostages of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) and annihilate them by Nov. 31, 2001.

Last May, Ms Macapagal had said that she decided to meet "force with force," and "arms with arms." She announced that the government had put up a P100-million bounty for the capture of the bandits—P5 million for each Abu Sayyaf leader and P1 million for each member involved.

In October, US anti-terrorism experts arrived in Basilan to give "recommendations" on how to rescue the ASG hostages, American missionary couple Martin and Gracia Burnham and a Filipino nurse. On Dec. 7, 17 more US soldiers arrived in Basilan who, the President said, were to train a special military unit that had been in hot pursuit of the bandits.

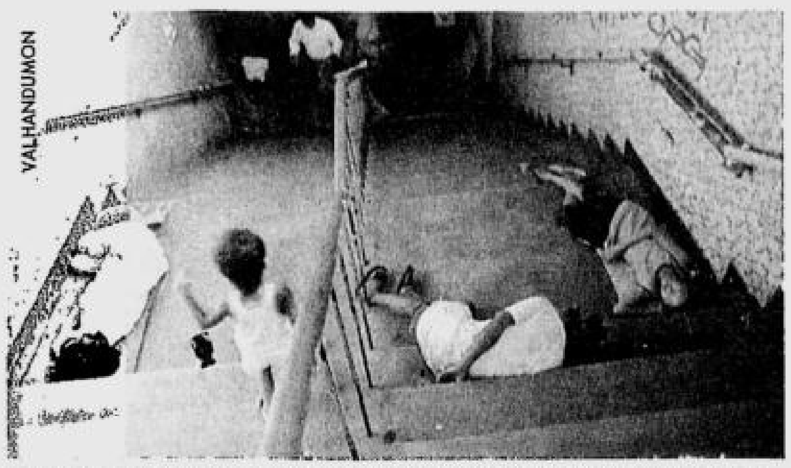
The government website showed that as of Oct. 15, the Armed Forces of the Philippines has neutralized 278 ASG terrorists: 78 killed, 139 captured and 61 surrendered. The strength of the ASG bandits was estimated to be about 200 core fighters but more than 2,000 individuals motivated by the prospect of receiving ransom payments for foreign hostages allegedly joined the group in August.

As of presstime, the three hostages are still in the hands of the ASG.

The Abu Sayyaf is demanding $2 million for the release of the Americans. But the President has remained firm in her administration's "no negotiation for ransom" policy.

### Traffic congestion

Ms Macapagal pledged that traffic congestion would be minimized within six months of Sona. Operationally, this means increasing the average traffic speed of 13.5 kph in July to 14.85 kph by November 2001 in 15 major thoroughfares.



**PROMISE:** To provide emergency employment for out-of-school youths.

VALHANDUMON

According to the government website, the average travel speed as of October in Metro Manila slightly increased from 13.5 kph in July to 13.6 kph in August.

Even that 0.1 increase costs the government a lot of money. The increase entailed hiring and deploying additional traffic personnel, upgrading and rehabilitating traffic signal systems at different intersections, implement the Small Scale Traffic Improvement Measures such as lane markings and minor geometric improvements and establish express lanes.

PDI Research tried to get from the Metro Manila Development Authority, the lead government agency for this promise, the actual number of additional hired and deployed personnel, the actual cost of hiring them, and the latest update on average travel speed. But the PDI Research was given the runaround by the MMDA.

In 1999, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (Jica) placed the total economic losses from Manila's traffic jams at P140 billion a year. Comparing the figure with the proposed 2002 budget, that's enough money to run three of the biggest government departments: defense, interior and local government, and agriculture with environment and natural resources thrown in.

Drivers and commuters interviewed by the PDI Research said that traffic is at its worst.

In most areas declared by the MMDA where traffic has improved, they said, there were no significant changes. Some have, in fact, worsened.

In Roxas Boulevard from Buendia Avenue to Naia Road, traffic congestion is terrible from morning to midnight said Rachel Cucio, an employee who commutes daily from Cavite. She said it is caused by buses, jeepneys and taxis which use a lane at Roxas Boulevard under the Baclaran overpass up to the front gate of Aseana Business Park as terminal even in the presence of MMDA and traffic policemen.

Congestion is worsened more by pedestrians who do not want to use the newly built Baclaran overpass to cross Roxas Boulevard and completely ignore, under the very noses of MMDA traffic personnel, the "no jaywalking sign" displayed about 20 meters away from the overpass.

Jovino Bojo, a company driver, however, noted that there has been a big improvement along Commonwealth Avenue, particularly in the Batasan area. The newly constructed underpass leading to the House of Representatives eased up this usually congested part of the road.

For Gerry Jano, another company driver, noted the worsening traffic congestion in Recto and Buendia where road constructions are constant.

Another driver, Benjie Labay, said that traffic has somehow eased on Aurora Boulevard in Cubao, the South Super Highway from Quirino to Bicutan, and Buendia in Makati.

### Cut red tape for housing permits

The President has pledged that she would reduce red tape in housing permits by the end of the year.

Long lines and a long wait are the usual when getting permits, clearances and licenses. A case in point is the processing of housing permits at the HUDCC, DAR, DENR and DA where processing has to go through 188 signatories.

She issued Executive Order No. 45 last October prescribing the period for issuance of housing-related certifications, clearances and permits and imposing sanctions for failure to observe the same.

She committed to reduce the number of signatories for housing to only 45.

However, after consultations among concerned government agencies, the focus shifted to reducing instead the length of time to process permits from the current average of two years to only 90 days, according to Rado Dimalibot, HUDCC assistant secretary.

The EO also tasked the agencies concerned to create implementing rules and regulations (IRR) and draft bills for the effective implementation of the EO within 30 days from its issuance.

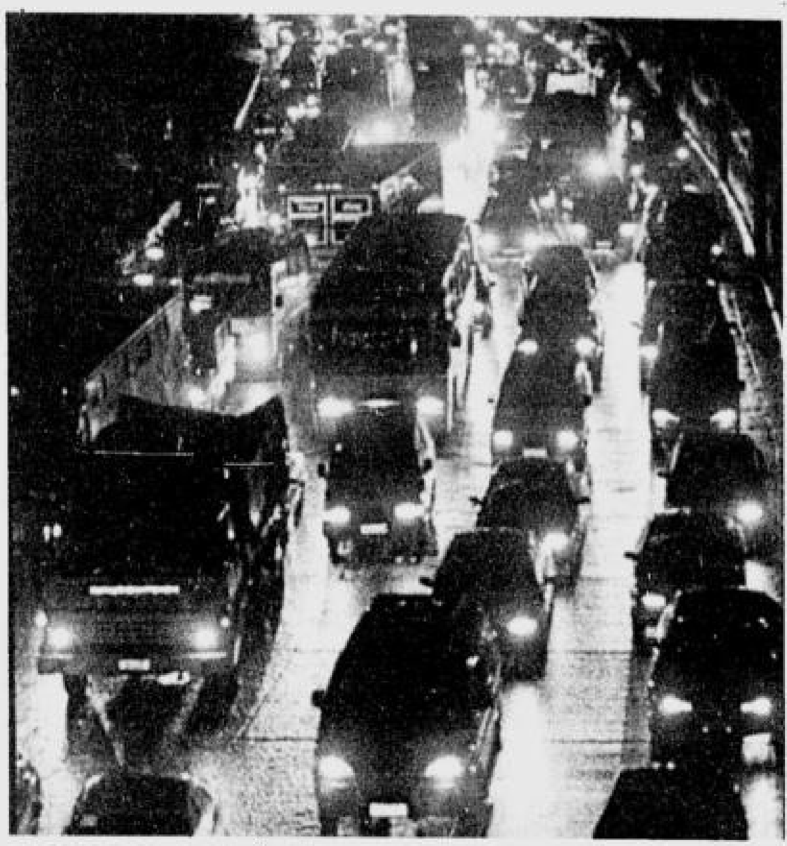
The IRRs are still with Presidential Legal Counsel Avelino Cruz for fine-tuning. Aside from the IRRs, draft bills for legislative measures were also submitted to Congress to further fast-track housing projects.

### Employment for Metro youths

Through the Emergency Employment Project, the President promised to mobilize government resources to generate a yearly emergency employment target of 20,000 for poor youths in Metro Manila who are neither working nor studying.

The Department of the Interior and Local Government, the agency assigned to undertake this program, implemented the Kalinga sa Kabataan Program which identified 35 barangays in 19 identified depressed areas in 10 LGUs in Metro Manila. The program was launched last August.

Beneficiaries were from the cities of Makati, Manila, Quezon, Pasay, Caloocan, Marikina, Mandaluyong and Pasig and from the municipalities of Taguig and Navotas. The LGUs through its Social Welfare Office were tasked to identify the target youth beneficiaries and work activities and provide dump trucks as well as additional tools.



**PROMISE:** To minimize traffic congestion within six months of the Sona. It has been estimated that the horrid Manila traffic results in the economic loss of P140 billion a year.

DENNIS SABANGAN

The program set an initial target of 10,000 beneficiaries from July to December 2001.

Another 10,000 are targeted for the months of January to June 2002.

As of October, the program boasted to have provided emergency employment to 9,278 out-of-school youths. A total of 42 working days were recorded from the 10 participating LGUs in Metro Manila.

Male beneficiaries, ages 18-26 years old, were assigned various work including cleaning streets, declogging of canals and *esteros*, painting of gutters, pedestrian lanes and street signs. Other tasks included tree planting and other clean and green programs, removal of graffiti and posters.

For an eight-hour workday, each youth was paid a minimum wage of P250 for working from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The program consists of an 18-week emergency employment schedule broken down into once-a-week employment for each youth beneficiary.

DILG assistance is comprised of wage distribution, on-site supervision, security and some implements such as brooms, shovels and waste bags.

### Rehab of the war-displaced

The President promised the rehabilitation of war-displaced Mindanaoans, the decampment of evacuees from evacuation centers to their homes and places of origin or relocation by Dec. 29, 2001. This pledge carries a provision of a P500-million funding from Opec Funds for community projects in conflict areas in Mindanao.

Initially, she created Interact-Mindanao to replace former President Estrada's Presidential Task Force on Relief and Rehabilitation of Central Mindanao, the hardest hit area.

Composed of different government agencies, NGOs and people's organizations, Interact-Mindanao was tasked to provide relief and rehabilitation to war-affected families. Later, Interact was dissolved and its task forwarded to the DSWD.

According to the DSWD, some 173,004 families or close to 928,874 persons have been affected by the conflict. Families were displaced from their places of origin and at one time were housed in the different evacuation centers in Central and Western Mindanao.

As of end-October, the government had released P346 million for combined assistance to the DSWD, LGUs, NGOs and other GOs.

The DSWD said it has provided a total of P273,108,708 in relief augmentation to some 154,977 evacuee families (854,531 persons) both inside and outside the evacuation centers. It said the total number served represented 89 percent of the total affected families.

The money was used for relief supplies, construction of core shelters, food for work and administrative support in the disaster operations.

According to the office of DSWD Undersecretary for Management Operations Clifford Burkely, five areas were identified for the decampment of evacuation centers in relation to the Sona commitment of the President. North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Lanao del Norte, Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur have a total of 112 evacuation centers with 13, 391 families.

As of Dec. 20, Burkley's office reported 109 evacuation centers had been closed down and a total of 12,861 families relocated or returned to their homes.

DSWD said that of the total 410 evacuation centers established since the start of the armed conflict, 371 are now closed while 39 still exist to serve 2,328 or 10,483 individuals.

A total of 148,233 evacuee-families or 774,039 persons returned to their places of origin. This includes 90,522 families who were served inside and 57,711 served outside evacuation centers. ***By Chona Galang, Maricar Tolosa, Armin Adina, Ray Leyesa and Michael Cucio***

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# 'Sona' boys going way of Mang Pandoy

(From page A1)

Already, Jomer's classmates call him "Pindidoy" or "Apo ni Mang Pandoy," to mean that he would also go the way of Felipe "Mang Pandoy" Nataño—also catapulted to the limelight and left out in the cold.

"We're in a difficult situation," said Jayson's 68-year-old grandmother Anacleta in an interview with the INQUIRER Friday night in Payatas.

"It seems that we are already considered rich with the meager amount we got. But it's not even enough for the kids' schooling or for any business."

Jomer's father Dionisio has yet to find a stable job; Erwin's family has yet to get word that it could own its small Payatas property; Jayson's grandmother fear he might not even finish high school.

To the minds of these families, their deprivations mean only one thing: The President has failed to deliver them, not one bit, from poverty.

In fact, Jomer said he feels the President has forgotten them in so short a time. "*Di na po ako babalik sa* Sona," he said.(I will not return to the Sona).

Worse, the entire family of Jayson who were buried alive in the Payatas landslide last year along with the other victims have yet to taste justice, said Anacleta Banogan.

### Wishes sail on paper boats

The three boys wrote all their wishes on paper boats which they floated down the Pasig River, hoping that they would reach the President.

Ms Macapagal got the boatful of wishes through an INQUIRER story about the boys and promised to fulfill them, point by point, since they happened to represent the socio-economic programs outlined in her Sona before a joint session of Congress at the Batasan.

Last October, the Department of Social Welfare and Development shelled out P16,000 each for the education of Jomer, Erwin and Jayson, and P10,000 for each of their family's livelihood, according to Jayson's grandmother.

The DSWD gave the families strict instructions "not to waste the money and to use every centavo of it wisely," said Jomer's father Dionisio.

They were also told that their "progress" would be stringently monitored on a monthly basis, Jomer's mother Merly added.

In an official statement, Malacañang said it was extending financial assistance to the "Bangkang Papel" boys Jomer, Erwin and Jayson to give them fighting chance for a better life.

Families of the boys, whose names the Palace could not even get correctly in its statement, called the announcement an empty political boast.

"Our condition has worsened. Everybody's monitoring our actions, thinking we are already rich," said Erwin's mother Dalmacia.

In reality, they are as poor as they were before, she added.

### The usual menu

On Christmas Eve, the three boys and their families shared the same meal they always had for as long as they can remember: rice cakes, "tasty" bread and Coke. Nothing more.

They said they would probably have the same meal today, New Year's Eve.

Anacleta Banogan, who now serves as Jayson's guardian after his entire family perished in the Payatas tragedy, set up a small car accessories shop with the P10,000 aid from the Palace.

"This is the best business we could think of. We used to have a small store. But it didn't earn because our neighbors really didn't have money to spend."

### Three pigs

Erwin's family invested in three pigs, while the Pabalans established a gas stove repair shop.

On a lucky day, Anacleta said her shop would earn close to P150. But most of the time her family makes ends meet with her husband's earnings as a jeepney driver.

Dalmacia said the pigs will not be ready for sale until February next year. Her husband can no longer work because he developed asthma for working long years as a house painter. Her family is now supported by a daughter earning a minimum wage.

Life is no different for the Pabalans. Merly said her shop barely earns since neighbors at Erap City in Montalban, Rizal, cannot even buy a gas stove.

Her husband lost his job at a bottling company when the family was forced to relocate to far-flung Montalban following the Payatas tragedy.

His earnings then could not even provide for his daily transportation from Montalban to Quezon City, more so, for his family's daily needs, Merly says.

He had to quit the job.

The families of Jomer, Erwin, and Jayson had already used up the P10,000 allotted for their livelihood in their small businesses. They are now hard-pressed to find ways to stretch the P16,000 they got for the kids' schooling.

Even before the boys appeared at the Sona, they already received a scholarship offer from the AMA Computer College, according to Dalmacia Dolera.

Jomer's and Erwin's families had to reject the offer since the boys would have to shuttle back and forth daily from Montalban to Project 8 in Quezon City to attend their classes.

Merly Pabalan said her family would have to spend at least P100 for Jomer's daily transportation allowance if she accepted the offer.

The DSWD gave the families of Jomer and Erwin P16,000 for their schooling for this year. It asked the kids to transfer to St. Vincent's Rolling School in Payatas, according to Dalmacia Dolera.

Despite living in Montalban, Erwin's family agreed to the transfer. His mother now regrets the decision.

"Every day, we're not sure if Erwin could go to school because we don't have money even for his fare. Perhaps, it would have been better if he didn't transfer to another school."

### Don't realign money

Jomer refused to go to St. Vincent's and instead enrolled at Kasiglahan Elementary School near their Montalban home.

Jomer's parents spent a portion of the P16,000 educational aid for the family's daily expenses and to buy a cheap, second-hand television for him.

The DSWD chided the family for this, reiterating a strict instruction never to realign the money, his mother said.

Jayson also goes to St. Vincent's where he is a Grade 5 pupil. His schooling is shouldered by a foundation in coordination with Ateneo de Manila University, according to his grandmother.

But Anacleta Banogan fears Jayson might not even finish high school since the family has no written agreement either with the foundation or the DSWD regarding the boy's schooling.

"What if Gloria's no longer president?" Anacleta asked. "What would happen to my grandchild? At this point, it seems that his educational support is only good for a year in the absence of a long-term agreement."

### What if . . .

Looking back, the families of the three Payatas boys imagine what life might have been had not the boys appeared at the President's Sona.

Jomer's mother Merly said the family would have been spared public scrutiny and the pressure of having to succeed on a meager financial support.

"If we could only return the money we got from the DSWD," she said. "It's painful when you have people continuously pressuring you to spend the money wisely even if they know that the money is not even enough."

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# Erap...

(From page A1)

yesterday afternoon.

He spent about 45 minutes with the children at the driveway of the presidential suite of the Veterans Memorial Medical Center. Estrada and son Jinggoy had been held at the military hospital since May while undergoing trial for economic plunder and other criminal charges.

Estrada's media handlers arranged for a full coverage of the affair, but his police security kept news crews away, preventing interviews and close-up shots of the affair.

The Damas de Filipinas orphanage in Paco, Manila, received special attention from Estrada during his short-lived presidency following a pre-dawn blaze that destroyed it on Dec. 3, 1998.

The fire killed 23 wards and five staff members.

Estrada recalled having the orphanage rebuilt by February 1999 relying solely on private funds that he helped solicit.

### Role reversal

"I used to be the one paying these orphans a visit at their place which was near Malacañang. Now they are the ones coming to see me," he said.

Estrada claimed that since his ouster, the orphanage had not enjoyed the same level of financial support from the government.

On Friday, the ousted President issued a New Year's message wherein he vowed to "return" and "fulfill" his promises to the country's poor, the masa crowd that catapulted him to the presidency in 1998.

The statement prompted observers to say that Estrada, in his quest for political redemption, was planning another run at the presidency.

Yesterday he clarified that he intended to resume his public service "in whatever capacity, even just as a private civilian," once the courts cleared him of criminal wrongdoing.

He issued the statement amid reports that another former President, Estrada's predecessor Fidel V. Ramos, was also eyeing a second term in the 2004 presidential elections.

# SPORTS

**AL S. MENDOZA**, Editor **EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA**, Assistant Editor

### SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

**BASKETBALL:** NBA – Orlando Magic vs New York Knicks at 8 a.m. (r – 8 p.m.) on Solar Channel (Sky and Home Cable)

This Week in the NBA at 12:30 p.m. on CNN

**GOLF:** Golfglobe 2001 at 9:30 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

PGA - The Tour Championship, First Round at 2 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

Mission Hills Tiger Woods Golf Challenge Highlights at 10 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

**AMERICAN FOOTBALL:** NFL Primetime at 8:30 a.m. on ESPN

## NBN 4 features fishing tilt

THE BEUCHAT team of the Dive Buddies Fish ID Adventure will be featured on Unlimited Diving tonight at 10:30 over NBN Channel 4 as they explore the popular Anilao Dive Site of Cathedral to identify various species of marine life. Also to be featured is the Talemaru, one of the more popular wrecks in Coron, Palawan. Unlimited Diving packages in Anilao, Moalboal Cebu and Boracay are also being offered in the show. For inquiries, call tel. 913-8605.

## Replaced coaches

**NBA NOTES**

*Henry Liao*

FOUR down, more to go?

Even before the 2001 segment of the current regular wars is over, four NBA head coaches already have been replaced. Three of them voluntarily resigned—at least that is what was declared publicly—and the other was fired.

Gone are Jeff Van Gundy (New York), Dave Cowens (Golden State), Tim Floyd (Chicago) and Dan Issel (Denver) in chronological order. All took a leave in December.

Incessant losing played a major role in the exit of Cowens, Floyd and Issel while frustration over his team's lack of effort and underachieving ways led to the resignation of Van Gundy despite the Knicks' 10-9 record.

The 39-year-old Van Gundy stepped down on Dec. 8, claiming he no longer had the same intensity necessary for the job and expressing a desire to spend more time with his family.

Van Gundy, who coached the Knicks for six-plus seasons and reached the NBA Finals in the lockout-shortened 1999 season, had two years left on his contract and was due to be paid about $7.5 million. Upon the recommendation of the defense-oriented Van Gundy, the Knicks named his erstwhile assistant Don Chaney as his replacement for the remainder of the campaign.

Cowens was given the pink slip on Dec. 15 after the Warriors stumbled to an 8-15 start. Star forward Antawn Jamison and backup guard Bob Sura both had publicly questioned Cowens' substitution rotations.

Also he often kept high-priced center Marc Jackson on the bench and a day before his firing, a visibly frustrated Cowens kicked playmaker Mookie Blaylock out of practice. Last season, his first with Golden State, the 53-year-old Cowens steered the club to the NBA's second-worst record at 17-65.

The Warriors named assistant Brian Winters to replace Cowens on an interim basis and will likely allow him to hold the reins for the rest of the season.

Floyd's turbulant three-plus years' tenure in Windy City, which was ushered in 1999 following the end of the Michael Jordan era, came to an end on Dec. 24 when he quit the job despite three years left on a contract that paid him a reported $2 million annually.

### WIN OVER HORNETS

# Jordan sets Wizards records

**WASHINGTON—Michael Jordan set Washington Wizards franchise records with 24 first-quarter points and 34 points in a half in a 107-90 victory over the Charlotte Hornets.**

Jordan finished Saturday night with 51 points, an MCI Center record and five short of Earl Monroe's franchise record of 56.

Jordan, in his first game since his all-time low 6-point performance Thursday night against Indiana, made his first four shots and went 10-for-14 in the first quarter. He also was 4-of-5 on free throws and played all 12 minutes.

Jordan accounted for all but five of the Wizards points as Washington led 29-28 after the quarter. His teammates were a combined 2-for-7.

Jordan rested at the start of the second quarter, re-entering the game with 6:02 remaining. He finished the half making five of eight shots for 10 more points.

For the game, Jordan made 21 of 38 shots from the field, 9 of 10 free throws and had seven rebounds and four assists in 38 minutes.

It was his 39th regular season 50-point game and the first by a Wizards player since Tracy Murray scored 50 at Golden State on Feb. 10, 1998. It was the first 50-point game by a Wizards player at home since Bernard King's 50 against Utah on March 6, 1991.

It was the first time Jordan topped the 50-point mark since scoring 55 points for Chicago in a playoff game against Washington in 1997.

The previous franchise record for first-quarter points was 23, set by Bernard King exactly 11 years earlier—Dec. 29, 1990—against Denver.

The previous record for points in a half was held by Jeff Malone, who had 33 against Phoenix on Feb. 27, 1988.

The franchise record for points in a quarter or half have only been kept since the team moved from Baltimore in 1973.

Monroe had 56 against the Los Angeles Lakers on Feb. 13, 1968.

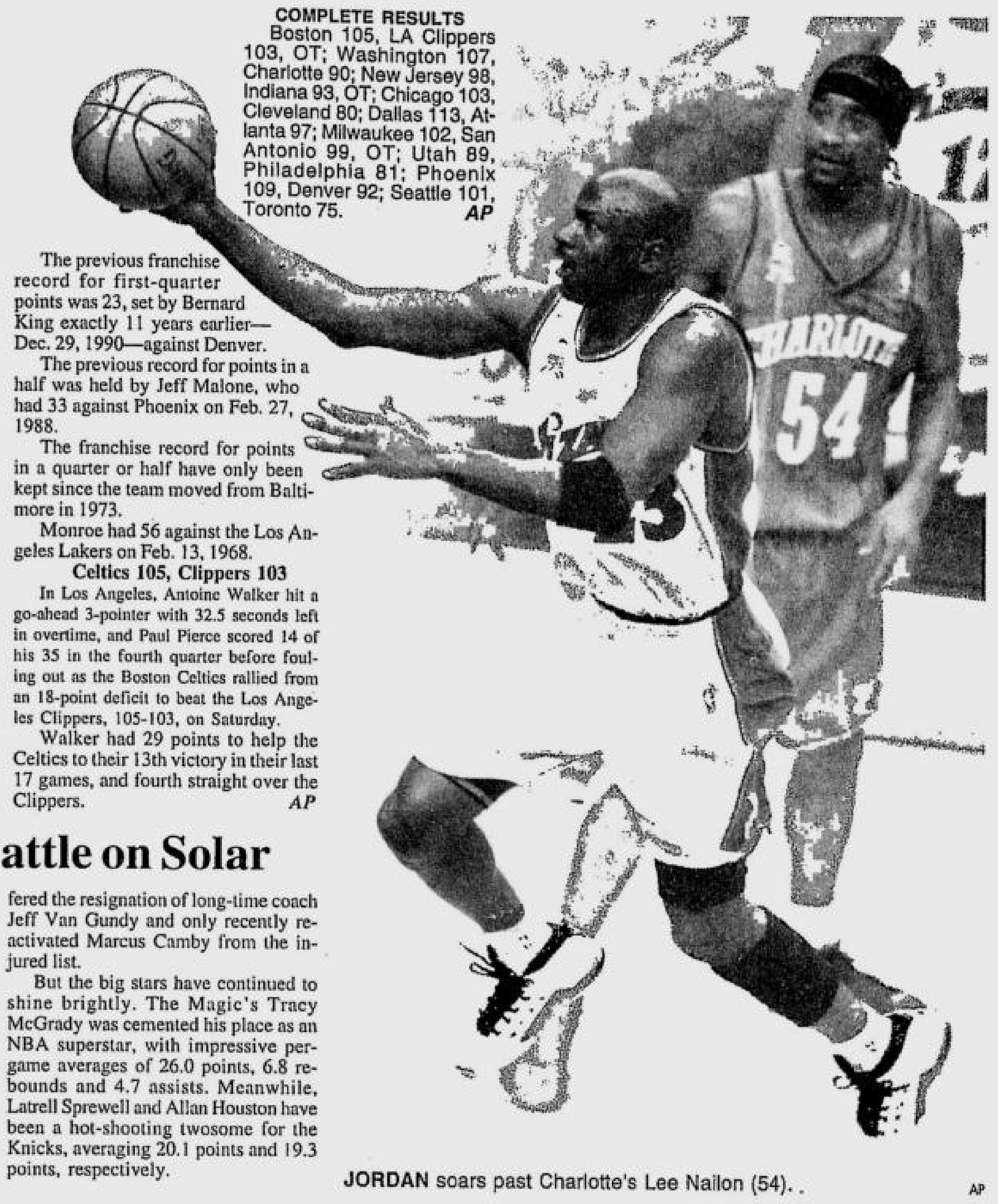
**Celtics 105, Clippers 103**

In Los Angeles, Antoine Walker hit a go-ahead 3-pointer with 32.5 seconds left in overtime, and Paul Pierce scored 14 of his 35 in the fourth quarter before fouling out as the Boston Celtics rallied from an 18-point deficit to beat the Los Angeles Clippers, 105-103, on Saturday.

Walker had 29 points to help the Celtics to their 13th victory in their last 17 games, and fourth straight over the Clippers. *AP*

**COMPLETE RESULTS**

Boston 105, LA Clippers 103, OT; Washington 107, Charlotte 90; New Jersey 98, Indiana 93, OT; Chicago 103, Cleveland 80; Dallas 113, Atlanta 97; Milwaukee 102, San Antonio 99, OT; Utah 89, Philadelphia 81; Phoenix 109, Denver 92; Seattle 101, Toronto 75. *AP*



**JORDAN** soars past Charlotte's Lee Nailon (54).. AP

## Magic-Knicks battle on Solar

SOLAR Entertainment will telecast today's (Monday, Dec. 31) NBA game pitting Atlantic Division rivals Orlando Magic and the New York Knicks live at 8 a.m. It will be replayed at 8 p.m. on the Solar cable channel, Skycable-24 and Homecable-17.

Despite high expectations, the Magic and Knicks have struggled this season and currently rank fourth and fifth place, respectively, in their division. The Magic (14-17 win-loss) lost All-Star Grant Hill for the season due to injury, while the Knicks (13-16) suffered the resignation of long-time coach Jeff Van Gundy and only recently reactivated Marcus Camby from the injured list.

But the big stars have continued to shine brightly. The Magic's Tracy McGrady was cemented his place as an NBA superstar, with impressive per-game averages of 26.0 points, 6.8 rebounds and 4.7 assists. Meanwhile, Latrell Sprewell and Allan Houston have been a hot-shooting twosome for the Knicks, averaging 20.1 points and 19.3 points, respectively.

## Laure named MVP

LBC Batangas Blades power forward Eddie Laure emerged as the 2001 MBA Most Valuable Player after he and Blades mentor Nash Racela was voted unopposed by the members of the MBA Press Corps as MVP and Coach of the Year, respectively.

Despite placing only fourth behind Fil-Ams Chris Clay and Jeffrey Flowers of FedEx Laguna Lakers and 1998 MVP John Ferriols of the Negros Slashers in statistical points, the 6-foot-3 Laure, a native of Katipunan, Zamboanga del Norte, got the nod over his teammate and last year's MVP Romel Adducul.

Laure was discovered by his agent-manager Charlie Dy during the 1995 Palarong Pambansa in Pangasinan while playing for Region XII, a year after his father died.

Dy brought him to Adamson University where he played for three years for the Falcons in the UAAP from 1995 to 1997.

His long years of patience playing basketball finally bore fruit for Laure this year. Earlier, he was chosen to become one of the members of the Philippine Men's Basketball Team who won the gold in the last 21st Southeast Asian Games in Malaysia.

## SPORTSWATCH

### Buccaneers subdue Ravens, 22-10

TAMPA, Florida—The Baltimore Ravens' formula for success also works for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. The Bucs beat the defending Super Bowl champions at their own game Saturday night, playing stifling defense and mustering just enough offense to edge the Ravens, 22-10. The victory moved Tampa Bay (9-6) to the brink of its fourth playoff berth in five years. The Bucs, who have won five of six after a 4-5 start, will clinch the final NFC wild-card spot if Miami beats or ties Atlanta on Sunday. For the Ravens (9-6), it was a disappointing return to the site of their dominating Super Bowl victory last January. Elvis Grbac threw two interceptions and was sacked five times, while Tampa Bay set up one of Doug Brien's three first-half field goals with a blocked punt. *AP*

### Swedish yacht shows the way

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Swedish yacht Assa Abloy was leading a depleted Volvo Ocean Race fleet across the Tasman Sea on Sunday but only seven nautical miles separated first from sixth place, race organizers said. Assa Abloy won line honors Saturday in the annual Sydney to Hobart race, the first section of the third leg for the eight Volvo race competitors. After a short break in Hobart, Assa Abloy, overall race leader Illbruck of Germany, News Corp, Djuice, Amer Sports One and Tyco all headed for Auckland. Amer Sports Too had to stay behind in Hobart to make repairs to a broken forestay and then a rudder after hitting two objects in the water, one of them believed to be a shark, its crew said Saturday. *AP*

### Kournikova, Roddick wild cards

SYDNEY, Australia—Russian Anna Kournikova and Andy Roddick of the United States have been granted wild cards into the Adidas International starting at the Sydney International Tennis Center on Jan. 6. Both players had intended to come to Sydney for the $US850,000 event, but Kournikova didn't have a high enough ranking due to a foot injury that left her sidelined for much of 2001. Tournament officials said Roddick's management forgot to enter the American. Roddick won three titles in 2001—Atlanta, Houston and Washington. He was a semifinalist at Nottingham and a quarterfinalist at the Tennis Masters Series in Canada, the Ericsson Open and the US Open. Kournikova and Roddick join Lindsay Davenport, defending champion Martina Hingis, Australian and French Open champion Jennifer Capriati, Serena Williams, the French Davis Cup team and Spanish star Juan Carlos Ferrero at the Australian Open leadup event. *AP*

### Ex-Harlem 'Shagg' passes away

GARY, Indiana—Opal "Shagg" Courtney, a former Harlem Globetrotters player credited with creating one of the team's most entertaining moves, has died. He was 89. Courtney, who died Wednesday, played three seasons with the Globetrotters. He is credited with creating the move of spinning the ball on the index finger, then rolling the ball across the shoulders and into his arms behind his back. Courtney began traveling with the Globetrotters in 1934. He left the team to earn more money to support his growing family. He and his wife of 69 years, Shellie Courtney, eventually had seven children. After leaving the Globetrotters, Courtney took a job as a crane operator at U.S. Steel in Gary, Indiana, where he stayed until he retired. *AP*

### NCAA YEARENDER

# San Sebastian domination looms

BY JUNE NAVARRO

SAN Sebastian College could build another dynasty after capturing the 2001 NCAA title.

With only the sharp-shooting Mark Macapagal venturing into the pro ranks, the Recto-based Stags still have the pieces to duplicate a rare "five-peat" which they first accomplished in the '90s.

The road to success, according to multi-titled head coach Turing Valenzona, isn't far-fetched as another domination by the Stags looms in the horizon.

It became evident after the Stags demolished the Jose Rizal University Heavy Bombers in the decider of their best-of-three championship series.

The Stags crushed the Ernani Epondulan-led Heavy Bombers, 95-62, to register one of the most lopsided championship games in the history of the NCAA.

So one-sided it was that midway in the third quarter the Heavy Bombers' followers started pushing, shoving and rushing toward the exits of the cauldron-hot Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

More than disappointed, JRU supporters and die-hards felt shame at how their heroes took the beating.

The Bombers' intact core of veterans—Ariel Capus, Nathaniel Gregorio, Rendel Dela Rea, Joel Finuliar and Epondulan, this year's MVP-bowed before the Stags, whom they thrashed in Game 2, 95-81, to force the titular clash into a make-or-break affair.

The Stags slipped past the Mapua Cardinals in the Final Four before beating the heavily favored Bombers, 77-74, in their title series opener.

"We don't have a dominant player in this team and I'm quite wary with the expected buildup of our opponents next year but we'll take a good shot at it using the materials that we have," said Valenzona, a three-time PBA champion coach in the '80s.

Valenzona steered the Stags to five straight titles in the mid-90s (1993-97) with prized cagers Rommel Adducul, Rodney Santos, Banjo Calpito and Brixter Encarnacion playing under his baton.

Perhaps none of Valenzona's present crop of players—Christian Coronel, Nurjamjam Alfad, Clarke Moore, Roy Falcasantos, Nicole Uy—could equalize Adducul and Santos in terms of skill and talent.

But with the heart and tenacity these players displayed during the season, he could probably create another dynasty.

## IOC should replace Elizalde

**CLEAN LIVING**

*Manolo R. Iñigo*

THE SOLUTION to the persistent local sports problem is to change the present system. And one way to do this in the coming year is to replace International Olympic Committee representative to the Philippines Frank Elizalde, who is remiss in his duties and responsibilities to protect the Olympic movement.

"We do not hold him in high regard," said a disgruntled sports official. "He took sides in the ouster of former POC president Cristy Ramos and he intervene dint he last POC election between Celso Dayrit and Go Teng Kok, Elizalde does not even lift a finger in resisting government intervention in sports. He is xxxxx from responsibility."

"He is the eyes and ears of the IOC to the Philippines," former POC president Julian Malonso once said, "because the Olympic people do not know the real situation in the country. That is the reason why he is the representative. He is supposed to report and recommend to the IOC which in turn will act on his recommendation. But what is happening now is the reverse, the IOC recommends and Elizalde implements."

Elizalde holds a very important and sensitive position in sports. He is the man who holds the key that will solve the problem besetting the local Olympic family. Elizalde's recommendation carries much weight with the IOC, now headed by Belgian Jacques Rogge, because the international body listens only to him.

However, Elizalde has this habit of always referring POC controversies to the IOC when he could very well settle these local conflicts here by merely calling the feuding families to the conference table, acting as arbiter early enough and preventing these problems form reaching the IOC. Elizalde was appointed to the position by former IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch on July 11, 1985 upon the recommendation of then International Football Federation president Brazilian Jose Havelange, a friend of Filipino soccer official Fernando Alvarez. Elizalde replaced the venerable Jorge Vargas. Happy New Year everyone!

* * *

**HALL OF FAME.** Alfonso "Boy" Marquez is a classic example of the *probinsiyano* who made good in the Big City. A strong candidate for enshrinement into next year's National Basketball Hall of Fame, Marquez started playing basketball for the Ateneo de Zamboanga High School team, Mindanao's 1954 secondary champion. Renowned Cebu cager Eddie Guillas of the University of the Visayas spotted him and brought him to UV where he played for three years before coming to Manila. He rose to national prominence in the Micaa, flying the colors of Ysmael Steel from 1958 to 1967. Ysmael won six National Open championships, one short of all-time record holder YCO.

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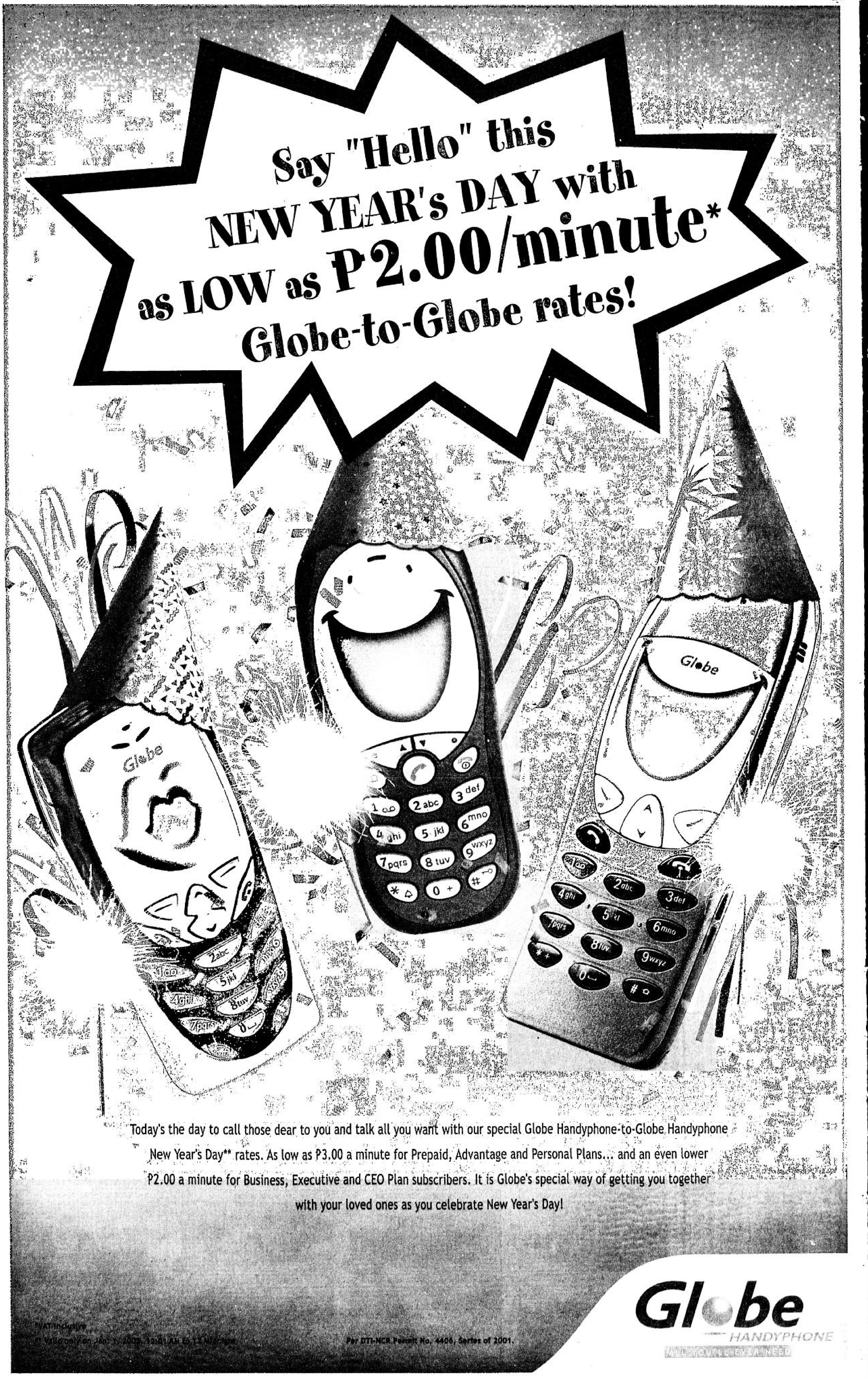
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Bare Eye: Do you really care for coach Ron Jacobs A16
Agarao, other crime victims left holding 'empty cup' A16

### DOH, PNP FIRECRACKER SAFETY GUIDELINES

# Better safe than wounded

**IF YOU cannot be stopped from using firecrackers to welcome the New Year tonight, you should at least follow the safety guidelines on handling firecrackers and pyrotechnics, according to the Department of Health and the Philippine National Police.**

In Manila, Mayor Lito Atienza warned the city's policemen not to fire their guns indiscriminately during tonight's celebration. Those who would be caught doing so would face stiff sanctions, including possible dismissal from the service, he said.

The PNP and the DOH have advised the public to stop using firecrackers and other pyrotechnic devices. But the two agencies have also issued the following guidelines on the safe handling of firecrackers and pyrotechnics:

- **Do not hold firecrackers while lighting them.**
- **Do not light more than one device at a time.**
- **Do not pick up dud firecrackers.**
- **Do not bend directly over pyrotechnic devices like fountains and crying cows while lighting them.**
- **Do not explode firecrackers near flammable substances.**
- **Don't attempt to explode a firecracker indoors, as it can cause a fire.**
- **Do not store firecrackers near flammable substances or materials.**
- **Do not allow children to handle fireworks.**
- **Do not light and throw pyrotechnics in the direction of people, passing vehicles or combustible objects.**
- **Do not use calcium carbide (kalburo) or other combustible liquids in firing bamboo cannons.**
- **Do not use firecrackers while under the influence of liquor.**
- **Do not light firecrackers under containers that tend to explode and produce splinters or shrapnel.**

BETTER SAFE/ A16

**NO** TO FIRECRACKERS. The DOH and the PNP warn against the use of firecrackers for the New Year.

# Garbage reduced tremendously –MMDA

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

PUTTING up a brave front, the Metro Manila Development Authority said it has beaten yesterday's deadline set by no less than President Macapagal-Arroyo to solve the garbage crisis in the metropolis.

"As far as we are concerned, we have substantially beaten the ultimatum," MMDA chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. yesterday told the INQUIRER.

Since the President issued the ultimatum, garbage in the metropolis have been "reduced tremendously" through the efforts of the MMDA and the local governments, Abalos said.

Caloocan Mayor Reynaldo Malonzo said there has been substantial improvements in the garbage situation, primarily because of the "strict" implementation of the waste segregation and recycling drive by the local governments.

But the foreign firm proposing the use of the controversial thermoselect garbage technology to the government said the garbage crisis in Metro Manila is far from over.

"You have to be blind to be able to say that there's no garbage in Metro Manila...that the mayors have beaten the President's deadline," said Roger van den Berghe, Philippine consultant of Interstate Waste Management Inc.

Contrary to what Ms Macapagal had announced before Christmas, the government has provided neither a short-term nor a long-term solution to the garbage crisis, Van den Berghe said.

But Abalos and Malonzo expressed satisfaction on what the MMDA and the local governments have done so far about the garbage problem.

Compared with last year, there are less garbage piled up in Metro Manila especially during the holidays, Abalos said.

"At least we are on the right track," Malonzo said. "Right now, we are preparing for the long-term solution of the problem."

Among the long-term solutions being eyed by the government are the multi-million garbage-control facility in Navotas, the operation of at least six landfills outside of Metro Manila, and the contract with a firm called Pro Environment, Abalos said.

# Mother Lily urges film industry to unite

BY LEAH SALTERIO

REGAL Films matriarch Lily Monteverde yesterday urged the members of the film industry to bond together, even as she said she will slow down in producing movies in 2002.

"We should work hand in hand to make the film industry strong," Monteverde said. "We should respect and help one another instead of trying to put down each other. I wish all the producers good luck in the coming year."

Monteverde, who is considered a major force in the local film industry, was still smarting from what she described as an insult by actor Cesar Montano onstage during the "Gabi ng Parangal" awards night of the 2001 Metro Manila Film Festival last Thursday. In his acceptance speech for the best actor award, which he won for his role in "Bagong Buwan," Montano said the best picture for him is still his movie, adding they would just "buy our trophy on Recto." Monteverde's 'Yamashita' won best picture over 'Bagong Buwan.'

"This film shows the best in the Filipino," Montano said of his movie. "Not all Filipinos are corrupt. There are still Filipinos out there worthy of the world's respect... We will just buy our trophy in Recto."

Monteverde said she was also hurt after she saw "Bagong Buwan" producers clapping and cheering as Montano delivered his speech.

"That's why I threw my cellphone on the floor," she told the INQUIRER yesterday.

"What he (Cesar) said was an insult to me, my family and the jurors. He implied that we stole their trophy for best picture or we didn't deserve to win. I am not a thief. My parents taught me to be good even when I was still young.

MOTHER LILY/ A16

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# Do you really care for coach Ron Jacobs?

**BARE EYE**

*Recah Trinidad*

NOBODY here could do it better than coach Ron Jacobs.

But this was before the current year headed for its final days.

Jacobs was definitely the best the PBA could tap to handle the national basketball team for next year's Asian Games campaign.

But this was before coach Jacobs suffered a stroke.

Look, no matter what they say about the exact state of his health, nobody could deny that Jacobs won't be as good as new again.

I hate to say this. But, just like to a rare plate or a drinking glass, his health has suffered a crack.

Which means he should be given a lot of care and rest, away from the killer stress that regularly hounds the basketball coach's perilous seat.

* * *

**I appreciate the sincerity and concern of PBA Commissioner Jun Bernardino who promptly announced that Jacobs, despite the trouble, would remain head coach of the RP national basketball team.**

**That, alone, was an acknowledgement of Jacobs' true worth.**

**The PBA did not say it. But the swift announcement from the Commissioner's Office could be equal to saying that a half-well Jacobs would be better than one whole, very healthy Filipino coach.**

**Maybe the PBA did not mean it that way.**

**But the ready perception is that, rain or shine, in foul weather or foul, Jacobs is irreplaceable.**

* * *

You see, if there was a leading candidate for a stroke among PBA mentors, it was not Ron Jacobs.

He was not even a distant candidate. The guy was a consummate health buff.

It won't be an exaggeration to say that he had programmed himself to live to a ripe full age, maybe a hundred years.

Naturally, nobody could believe that he had been downed by a stroke, the seriousness of which had landed him in the ICU.

It was not unusual to see Jacobs jogging under the sun.

But the last time he was asked, he said he had opted to stay indoors. He now worked with the treadmill instead, he said.

Being a stickler for perfection, you could just imagine how hard he had trained inside the house to be in eternal fighting shape.

* * *

**Now, this is not exactly a distress call. Call it a simple suggestion, if you wish.**

**But once we're all through with this running, rushing, jumping and pushing that come with the holidays, PBA decision makers must put the RP team coaching problem in its proper perspective.**

**Because no amount of plain assurances from laymen would do to ensure that Jacobs would not again be risking his health in this national coaching endeavor.**

**Yes, there have been announcements from the hospital (St. Luke's) that Jacobs was recovering fast.**

**But just how fast is fast?**

**I have actually consulted at least two physicians. I told them the state of things.**

**It seemed Jacobs would be calling the shots in Pusan, despite the shocking seizure he had suffered.**

**You know what? The doctors were themselves very shocked.**

**Without batting an eyelash, they both warned that Jacobs could seriously imperil his life if he's promptly allowed to resume his chores in the national cage team.**

**Why? Because, they said, it's not plain office work Jacobs would be tackling.**

**The poor fellow would be the center of stress storms that even normal, very healthy individuals may not be able to handle with aplomb.**

**His general health, after that seizure, would be both shaky and very tender, to say the least, the doctors explained.**

* * *

Thank you, I told the physicians.

I however told them that, knowing Jacobs, he would stick it out with the national team, at the risk of endangering his health again.

Why? Because the guy, other than being a perfectionist, is no quitter.

I have learned about these fine traits on the RP national basketball coach from a first-hand source: Coach Ron's own mother.

The happy information was passed on during a sidewalk coffee break way back in 1985, when Jacobs brought the San Miguel team to the World Club Basketball championship in Spain.

The man, informed his mother, would always give his best. He also made it a point to draw the best from his players, whom he trained to be sticklers for perfection, from the wearing of their socks, to the proper tying of shoelaces.

* * *

**By the way, I continue to be besieged by concerned people asking what could have caused Jacobs health to crack.**

**There had been suggestions that stress must've taken its toll this early. Because, callers said, Jacobs could've realized the sickening lack of ready materials he would need for the Philippines to at least be a serious title contender in Pusan.**

**He did not like what he saw?**

**Just the same Jacobs could be blinded by his dedication.**

**So, if he should be made to make a final choice, it should be done only with the assistance of a competent physician.**

**This problem must be handled very carefully, objectively, professionally. And forget about who could end up a laughing stock.**

**We must leave nothing to chance, forget about personal sentiments and fears.**

**This is no longer a plain sports puzzle.**

**We do care for Philippine basketball but, more than anything else, we are concerned with Mr. Jacobs.**

# Better safe . . .

**(From page A15)**

- **Do not light *kuwitis*, *trompillo* or similar devices under electrical wires or covered places.**

Interior and Local Government Secretary Jose D. Lina has also urged all governors, mayors and other local officials nationwide to lead in the "Iwas Paputok" campaign in their localities to ensure a safe and injury-free celebration.

Lina directed Assistant Secretary Marius Corpus, head of the DILG Legislative Liaison Office, to draft a bill for submission to Congress that would designate a particular area or place in the barangay where residents could light pyrotechnic devices or firecrackers during Christmas, New Year and other celebrations.

Lina said the bill would help prevent fires and firecracker-related injuries during the celebrations.

He said the barangay officials and watchmen would supervise and control the designated areas.

He earlier enjoined governors, city and municipal mayors and barangay chairs to promote an alternative form of revelry among their constituents and to issue a memorandum declaring local government offices and buildings and their premises as "firecracker-free zones."

He also asked the officials to support the government's "Iwas Paputok" campaign spearheaded by the DOH.

Lina urged local officials to prohibit government employees from bringing firecrackers and other pyrotechnic materials in their premises and to put up posters and streamers in different offices and conspicuous places showing support for Oplan Iwas Paputok.

Lina also directed DILG regional, provincial, city and other field officials to strictly monitor and enforce the firecracker-free zones in their respective jurisdiction and to submit to his office reports of firing of guns, casualties or firecracker-related injuries or even no casualty at all.

He appealed to the public to celebrate the New Year without using firecrackers.

Manila's Mayor Atienza said he instructed Chief Supt. Nicolas Pasinos Jr., director of the Western Police District, to inspect the service firearms of all Manila policemen after New Year's Day to determine if these have been fired during the time of the celebration.

Policemen whose guns would be found to have been fired prior to the inspection would be made to explain why they discharged their weapons, Atienza said. Those who could not give a satisfactory explanation could face possible criminal and administrative charges, he said.

"Policemen should set an example to the public," the mayor said in a press statement. "They should go after those who violate the law against the illegal firing of firearms instead of being the violators themselves."

He also directed the WPD to arrest anyone who would be caught illegally firing guns.

He ordered the city police to continue maintaining high visibility on Manila's streets to deter criminals who would try to take advantage of the holiday revelers. ***With a report from Jerome Aning***

# Christmas on the road

By Maricris Irene V. Tamolang

ILL BE HOME FOR CHRISTMAS...
( I WISH, I WISH...)
EmioS.

UNLIKE other heads of the family, who were home for noche buena, bus driver Hector Castañeda was on the road, driving a Victory Liner bus at the Expressway with about 50 passengers heading to the provinces of Isabela and Cagayan.

But this was for the love of his family.

For 11 years now, Castañeda, 32, has been the family's breadwinner.

He started driving when he was 16 and has been with Victory Liner for four years now. He earns just enough to support his parents and three younger siblings back home in Aritao, Nueva Vizcaya. He was also able to provide his family a decent meal for noche buena.

Members of Castañeda's family gathered together last Christmas Eve for a simple feast of pancit bihon, fruits and chicken. And even with Castañeda absent, they celebrated Christmas in true Filipino fashion.

They ate, went back to bed and rose early to attend Mass in the morning.

"Christmas celebration in the province is a very simple one," Hector said. "There would be no Christmas shopping but I usually provide them gifts whenever I have a chance to go home."

Single and the third in a brood of six, Castañeda took the responsibility of sending his younger siblings to school since his father's earnings as a jeepney driver was not enough. Now that his father no longer holds a job because of his age, Castañeda said he makes a lot of sacrifices so he can provide for them.

"Sometimes I get lonely when I see other families celebrating Christmas together, but it's part of my work," Hector said. "Just like a soldier, my job entails sacrifice taking passengers from Manila to the province during the holidays. It is my duty to drive them home and I have no choice for it is the job I have."

Castañeda finished high school and started working as an electrician for his province's electric cooperative at age 16. In 1991, at age 21, he worked as a driver for the Saudi Aramco Shuttle bus, an Arabian-American oil company in Saudi Arabia.

### Home from Saudi

He came back home in February 1997 and applied for a job at Victory Liner. Since then, Christmas for Castañeda was spent on the road transporting passengers to the provinces in the North.

"We are paid by kilometers," fellow driver Tomas Uy said. "From Manila to Isabela (326 kilometers), the pay would be about P200. When you drive to a farther destination, say Tuguegarao in Cagayan, the pay would be about P300."

Terminal master Armando Mendoza said Victory Liner at the Kamias station has 92 drivers at present. They are provided with a P75 meal allowance per day and a commission of .05 percent if they reach a quota per roundtrip. Their best pay is 4.5 percent of their collection for driving about seven hours during a trip. They can only take one day off a week, but they can choose to take four days off from work if they decide to just use it at the end of the month.

In 1998, Hector was able to spend Christmas at home. But since then, he spent the Yuletide making a living. His only consolation is seeing happiness in the faces of the passengers who long to be with their families during the holidays.

"Sometime in December 1997, many passengers heading to Isabela and Cagayan were left stranded in the station," Hector said. "All of them weren't accommodated in the last trip. I was scheduled to spend Christmas at home at the time, but taking pity on them, I decided to take another trip just so I can drive them home. I wasn't able to spend noche buena with my family, but I felt the passengers' gratitude when I drove them home to their families."

### Optimistic

Despite the hardship in Castañeda's job, he is contented that he could make both ends meet. His two older siblings are already married. The eldest drives a tricycle and farms for a living, but an older sister is a housewife. Another sibling sells homemade soaps, and another just finished college. The youngest is still in college in the province, hoping to finish education and teach.

Castañeda said he is still optimistic of the coming year to have plans of building a house for a family of his own. But that would wait until he is earning enough to settle down, he said.

"I believe that God is up there guiding us for as long as you are diligent," Castañeda said. "One thing I can do now is prepare for my future children for them not to experience what I have gone through."

# Paref-Northfield appeals to 'conscience' of residents

By Agnes E. Donato

HAVING virtually lost in the judicial arena, the Paref-Northfield School for Boys has appealed to the "conscience" of the opposing Greenmeadows residents for the future of its controversial school project.

But Pierangelo Alejo, Paref-Northfield executive director, said that the school administration was not losing hope even after the Ortigas and Company Limited Partnership (OCLP) recently withdrew its support for the project.

Alejo maintained that the Ortigas withdrawal of its waiver of the restrictions imposed on its donation of the 3.1 hectare open space in Greenmeadows to the Quezon City government was "not absolute." He pointed out the "however clause" in the letter, in which OCLP executive vice president Rex Drilon III expressed willingness "to consider, in the future, any similar request provided that the issues and conditionalities that we had raised earlier are fully complied with and had been judicially and administratively settled."

"It is very sad and unfortunate that the original donor of the land is withdrawing its waiver, but we can see clearly the pattern or the intention behind the issue," Alejo said.

He claimed that the OCLP's withdrawal was a result of much "politicizing" by opposing Greenmeadows residents.

He also lamented that the Paref-Northfield issue had become highly publicized, "to the detriment of the school whose job is not to politicize but to give public service to those who can and cannot pay."

Asked if the school administration had considered other locations for its project, Alejo maintained that he and his colleagues were not giving up on the Greenmeadows project.

"For more than four years, we exhausted all possible sites in Quezon City and even went as far as Antipolo," he said. "We believe that the Greenmeadows project is still the most doable and we are pinning our hopes on it."

# Policemen accused of murder

By Christian V. Esguerra

TWO WITNESSES yesterday accused two members of the Pasay Special Weapons and Tactics of robbing and killing a messenger of a moneychanger in Pasay last Dec. 21.

In their statement, the witnesses said it was SPO2 Melanio Advincula and SPO1 Felimon Batula who robbed Edward Provido and Aramar Anuddin of P890,000 cash. Provido was killed during the robbery.

Two other Pasay police officers were reportedly implicated in the case, but their names were not yet available.

One of the witnesses claimed Batula and Advincula, who were on board a motorcycle, bumped the motorcycle carrying Provido and Annudin near the corner of Cuenca and Libertad streets about 7:30 p.m. last Dec. 21.

The policemen then allegedly tried to take Provido's bag containing the money. But when the Provido refused to yield the bag, Batula shot him, one of the witnesses said in his statement.

Batula and Advincula were not available for comment yesterday.

# Agarao, other crime victims left holding 'empty cup'

REMEMBER us when you drink from this cup.

When Carina Agarao, head of the Crusade Against Violence, sent some media people white mugs for Christmas, she made sure what they were getting was not just something to hold their coffee. It also contained a desperate plea for understanding and justice.

The present, she said in a letter enclosed with it, was a symbol of the plight of the victims and survivors of heinous crimes—an empty cup.

CAV is composed of survivors and relatives of victims of heinous crimes, including Agarao herself. Her human rights lawyer husband Clarence Agarao was shot dead on April 30, 1996 by a gunman allegedly hired by suspected mastermind Reynato Macalalag.

Even as she sent the symbolic mugs to media, Agarao said in the letter that "we intentionally did not give anything this Christmas."

"We, the victims of crime, if given a choice, would skip this day," she wrote.

As she and other relatives of victims of heinous crimes recall "wonderful Christmases we had" with the loved ones who were killed, "we are reminded of how they were taken from us—not by the hand of God but through the evil designs of people who do not value life," Agarao said.

She and the other victims of injustice "are holding an empty cup" this Christmas, she said.

They hope that people would understand "the grief that envelops" the survivors and their families, and that the government would "address our concerns by bringing these criminals to justice."

The CAV letter ended with a "Happy New Year!" but also with the sad request: "As you drink from this cup, remember us along with the countless families out there who are similarly situated."

# Killed over video game

A FIGHT over a video game led to the death of a man in Sampaloc, Manila.

Edwin Q. Relomen, of 1350 Algeceras St., Samplaoc, Manila, stabbed dead his neighbor Angelo B. Pia, 28, said investigator SPO1 Dave P. Tuazon, of the Western Police District-homicide section.

Pia died from two stab wounds in the body, while Relomen is still at large, Tuazon said.

Police said Relomen and Pia had a fight over a video game about 9 p.m. on Saturday in front of the Relomen's house in Sampaloc.

Relomen allegedly pulled out a fan knife and lunged at Pia at the height of their altercation, police said. Pia was not able to parry Relomen's thrusts and was hit twice in the body, police said. Relomen escaped after Pia fell bleeding on the ground, police said.

Pia died while undergoing surgery at the Jose R. Reyes Memorial Medical Center. Police said his body was later taken to the Sanctuary Funeral Homes for an autopsy and safekeeping. ***Philip Tubeza***

# Mother Lily . . .

**(From page A15)**

"Besides, why do I have to steal a trophy when I have so many best picture trophies at home from the movies made for Regal by Lino Brocka, Mike de Leon, Ishmael Bernal and Peque Gallaga?"

Monteverde produced "Yamashita" under Regal's sister outfit, MaQ Productions, managed by her daughter Roselle Monteverde-Teo and Douglas Quijano.

"Cesar said their movie was made by God," she said. Does it mean 'Yamashita' was made by Satan? "I'm very proud of that movie. It was directed by Chito Roño, who is one of the best directors we have today in the industry."

Despite the slew of awards, which "Yamashita" gathered, the Chito Roño film ranks only third in the filmfest box office tally, following "Bahay ni Lola" and "Bagong Buwan."

"But if I have the resources and machinery like Star Cinema, which can show a movie trailer on TV every three minutes, 'Yamashita' would have made money three times more than 'Bagong Buwan,'" Monteverde said.

The Regal matriarch vowed "never" to work with Montano in a movie. She also said "No way!" when asked if she will commission "Bagong Buwan" director Marilou Diaz-Abaya to direct a film for Regal. Abaya had done for Regal the sex-drama "Sensual." "But it flopped," Monteverde said of "Sensual."

Early this year, Abaya resigned from the Directors' Guild of the Philippines after the organization protested the banning of Regal's controversial sex movie, "Live Show," directed by Joel Reyes.

Abaya came out with a position paper titled, "Sex Every 10 Minutes," that exposed the seamy underside of the sex movie sub-industry. The paper earned the ire of some members of the industry who called Abaya a "traitor."

"She (Abaya) had been going against me since that 'Live Show' controversy," Monteverde said. "So why will I still choose her to direct a movie for me?"

But next year, Regal will make fewer movies, Monteverde said.

"I will be more selective in the projects that I will produce," she said. "I just want to spend more time with my seven grandchildren who are really my happiness at the moment. I also want to farm."

## THE DAILY GOSPEL

**Monday, December 31, 2001**
**7th Day after Christmas**

**1st Reading: 1 Jn 2:18-21**
**Gospel: Jn 1:1-18**

In the beginning was the word. And the word was with God and the word was God; he was in the beginning with God.

All things were made through him and without him nothing came to be. Whatever has come to be, found life in him, life which for humans was also light. Light that shines in the dark: light that darkness could not overcome.

A man came, sent by God; his name was John. He came to bear witness, as a witness to introduce the Light so that all might believe through him. He was not the Light but a witness to introduce the Light.

For the Light was coming into the world, the true Light that enlightens everyone. He was already in the world and through him the world was made, the very world that did not know him. He came to his own, yet his own people did not receive him; but all who have received him he empowers to become children of God for they believe in his Name. These are born, but without seed or carnal desire or will of man: they are born of God.

And the Word was made flesh; he had has tent pitched among us, and we have seen his Glory, the Glory of the only Son coming from the Father: fullness of truth and loving-kindness.

John bore witness to him openly, saying: This is the one who comes after me, but he is already ahead of me for he was before me.

From his fullness we have all received, favor upon favor. For God had given us the Law through Moses, but Truth and Loving-kindness came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, but God-the-Only-Son made him known: the one who is in and with the Father.

### Commentary

*Jesus is described in today's gospel as full of truth and loving kindness. Later on, we are told, "From his fullness we have all received, favor upon favor." Christ's fullness is meant to benefit us. In daily life, another person's fullness, whether it be of wealth or beauty or intelligence or power may hardly matter to us, because that wealth, beauty, intelligence and power may not be shared with us at all but may even be used against us. But with Jesus, everything that he has is shared with us. Can we catch this spirit of Jesus and share generously with others whatever gifts we have?*

***Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: claret@cnl.net; Websites: http://www.bible.claret.org (Claretian Publications Inc.) & http://missionaries.claret.org (Claretians in the Philippines)***

## SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

**POLITICAL LAW (CONSTITUTIONAL LAW)/STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION—Effectivity of laws**—While as a rule, laws take effect after 15 days following the completion of their publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines, the legislature has the authority to provide for exceptions, as indicated in the clause "unless otherwise provided." In the case at bar, Section 10 of R.A. No. 7169 provides: "Sec. 10 Effectivity—This Act shall take effect upon its approval. Hence, it is clear that the legislature intended to make the law effective immediately upon its approval. It is undisputed that R.A. No. 7169 was signed into law by President Corazon C. Aquino on January 2, 1992. Therefore, said law became effective on said date. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Kapunan, First Division, Philippine Veterans Bank v. Vega, G.R. No. 105364, June 28, 2001]

**DIGEST BY R.B. VERA**

**NOT JUST A NEIGHBOR.** Veteran actress Caridad Sanchez (second from left) accepts the award-tribute to slain actress Nida Blanca, presented by (from left) Nestor de Villa, Delia Razon, lawyer Espiridion Laxa and Ronnie Quizon (representing dad Dolphy).

PHOTOS BY JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

**"YAMASHITA"** producer Roselle Monteverde accepts the best picture plum for the movie. Looking on are (from left) Albert Martinez, Danilo Barrios, Helen Gamboa, MMDA chair Ben Abalos, Armando Goyena and Carlo Muñoz.

### 'GABI NG PARANGAL'

# An evening of no-shows, upsets and surprise winners

BY ALEX Y. VERGARA

ACE director Marilou Diaz-Abaya remained cool, while former Miss Universe and first-time film producer Margie Moran looked bored as "Yamashita: The Tiger's Treasure" continued to eclipse "Bagong Buwan" in the recent Metro Manila Film Festival awards night.

Rather than kiss his wife, former actress Sunshine Cruz, Cesar Montano jumped to his seat and kissed Marilou on the lips instead, as he was declared best actor for his performance in "Bagong Buwan."

He showed his displeasure on air, but stopped short of returning his trophy in protest like what the late director Lino Brocka did more than two decades ago, when the Manunuris relegated his lead star Amy Austria to best supporting actress in "Jaguar."

In an evening with its usual share of no-shows, upsets and surprise winners, everyone at the PICC Reception Hall waited anxiously as presenter Dina Bonnevie opened the magic envelope. Who knows? In a crowded field when even the likes of Allan K. and, yes, Mikey Macapagal Arroyo is nominated, anything could happen.

In their obvious attempt to please everybody, the board of jurors didn't even bother to whittle the list of nominees to reflect the best in each category.

Nevertheless, "he deserved it!," said a beaming Marilou as Cesar went on stage to accept his award. The two first worked together several years ago in the critically acclaimed "Jose Rizal" before doing a film on the country's endangered marine environment in "Muro-Ami."

"I love you!," Sunshine screamed like a movie fan to the delight of everyone on the table. Like in years past, a formal dinner preceded the show.

Many expected Cesar to run away with the award, but his lock on the trophy was soon threatened when "Yamashita" began its winning streak. The best actor race was a toss up between Cesar and sentimental favorite Armando Goyena. The former matinee idol's children Tina, Maritess, Rosie, Ces and Johnny Revilla came with their dad.

Amy may have lost the plum acting award to Assunta de Rossi, local filmdom's flavor of the season, but the veteran actress, who was sporting her trademark one-length hairdo, looked stunning and composed beside husband Duke Ventura.

She and costar Caridad Sanchez lost to the De Rossi sisters, Assunta and Alessandra. Despite the setback, best supporting actress nominee Caridad managed to enjoy the rest of the evening in the company of her children Cathy and AJ.

The outspoken actress, however, remained true to form when LVN colleague Delia Razon unwittingly relegated her as a mere "neighbor" of the late Nida Blanca, when she was asked to accept a special award in behalf of the slain actress. It was like she was being asked by Delia to deliver a box fruit cake or a bowl of fruit salad to Nida's orphaned daughter Kay Torres in White Plains, and Caridad didn't allow this to pass.

"I'm not only a neighbor," she said, her voice beginning to crack. "I'm a neighbor and a friend of Dorothy (Nida's real name)." So there!

The evening also had its share of light moments. Wearing tight gowns and spiked heels, Pilita Corrales and Dulce found it impossible to descend a hidden plight of stairs backstage after their medley of Tagalog songs. The two divas, this time with their skirts raised, waited until a commercial break before emerging again on stage.

"Hey, we want to go down already!," Pilita hollered in Filipino to an amused Edu Manzano, who hosted the awards night.

Apart from Yamashita's sweep, the show also proved to be a night of feisty and or amusing Cebuana entertainers.

# Cherry Pie has no dream of super-stardom

### SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

*Leah Salterio*

FOR THE first time in her acting career, **Cherry Pie Picache** experienced filming a movie in the United States and she proudly says her role in "American Adobo" is her biggest break to date.

She plays a single woman who migrates to New York after college and goes into a seemingly endless search for the right guy in her life.

In the movie directed by **Laurice Guillen**, Cherry Pie shares stellar billing with **Christopher de Leon, Dina Bonnevie** and **Ricky Davao**. They play erstwhile college friends who settle in New York, where they share stories, secrets, experiences, love and life's highs and lows, made more poignant and flavorful as they gather over their favorite dish, the distinct Pinoy *adobo*.

In the past, Cherry Pie did memorable roles in **Carlitos Siguion-Reyna**'s "Abot-Kamay ang Pangarap," **Rory Quintos'** "Anak" and last year's critically acclaimed money-maker, "Tanging Yaman," directed by Laurice Guillen. A few months back, she also starred with **Maricel Soriano** in **Joel Lamangan**'s dramatic opus, "Mila."

From her big screen debut as a sexy star in "Kolehiyala," Cherry Pie has metamorphosed into a fine dramatic actress who has been given her share of remarkable film roles.

For someone who didn't plan of entering show biz, Cherry Pie has admirably made great strides in her career. She even won acting honors — best actress from the Asian TV awards for the "Maalaala Mo Kaya" episode, "Aklat"; and best supporting actress from Bahaghari Awards for the "GMA Telesine" episode, "Melinda."

Yet, despite her acting breaks, Cherry Pie doesn't dream of superstardom..Although her career is far from being sluggish, she gets to do challenging roles which underscore her acting talent, like the one in "American Adobo."

"I just want to be known as a good actress," Cherry Pie says. "In the first place, my family was against it when I joined show biz. I had a big fight with my parents after 'Kolehiyala' was shown. I never really thought of stardom."

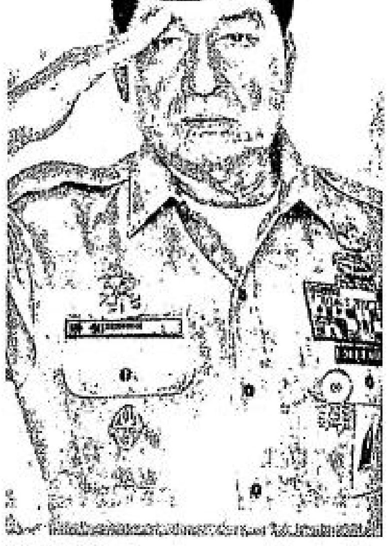
When she was younger, Cherry Pie wanted to be a stage actress. She would tag along with her sister, who was then doing theater plays for **Orlando Nadres.**

Cherry Pie also joined oratorical and declamation contests in school.

"I was into performing arts then," she offers. "But I never really thought about being a show biz star."

Even when she became a commercial model, landing in a TV ad with **Vilma Santos** for Eskinol, Cherry Pie says she never imagined herself acting in front of the cameras. But as fate would have it, she was destined to be a TV and movie actress.

"That's why when I did 'Anak' with Ate Vi, I even made her sign our poster for the Eskinol ad," Cherry Pie shares.



**GARCIA.** A veteran soldier in the explosive action flick, "Bro."

She gets to work with Laurice Guillen anew in "American Adobo," a joint production of **Tony Gloria**'s Unitel Pictures and ABS-CBN Entertainment. The script is by New York-based writer **Vincent Nebrida**.

"It was a great experience doing the film in New York," Cherry Pie says. "For a month, we lived and breathed the New Yorker's lifestyle. We were given our own apartments in Manhattan, where we did our own laundry, cooking and grocery.

"We shot 12 hours a day, five days a week, for 21 days. We worked with an American crew and some American stars. Everyone was really very professional."

Aside from the filming experience, Cherry Pie relishes her New York stay with several thrilling moments. Three blocks from where they were shooting, **Woody Allen** and **Robert de Niro** were also filming a movie.

In the airport, she also spotted actress **Julia Ormond** and was immediately reduced to being a movie fan.

"I asked for her autograph and chatted with her," Cherry Pie shares. "I told her I really admired her performance in 'Legends of the Fall.' I also told her I'm an actress in the Philippines and I did a movie in New York. She was very nice."

"American Adobo" is Cherry Pie's second film to be shot abroad. Last year, she went to Hong Kong with Vilma when they did "Anak" for Star Cinema.

Cherry Pie cannot be thankful enough that she was tapped to join the stellar cast of "American Adobo." She lauds the joint production effort of Unitel Pictures and ABS-CBN, which will release the movie middle of January.

"We should encourage joint productions like this," Cherry Pie says. "The film industry is down and if two companies merge their resources to produce a movie, that's very encouraging for people in the industry."

"American Adobo" will be released simultaneously in the Philippines and in three cities in the United States—New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Also starring in the movie is New York-based Fil-Am actor **Paolo Montalban**, who appeared opposite singer **Brandy** in the Hollywood film version of "Cinderella."

By the time this piece comes out, Cherry Pie will be in Dallas to spend New Year with her older sister. She considers "American Adobo" as a great way to kick off her career in 2002, as the movie hits the theaters next month.

"I'd like to play lead support like Cherrie Gil or Gina Alajar," Cherry Pie says. "After more than 10 years in the business, I no longer have this illusion of being a superstar. I'm content with the way my career is going. I only want to make good movies and be remembered for the roles I played."

**AMERICAN "PIE."** Had her taste of a New Yorker's lifestyle when she filmed "American Adobo" in the US.

### Not disappointed

**EDDIE Garcia** didn't make a big fuss when his action movie, "Bro . . . Kahit Saang Engkwentro," didn't make it to this year's Metro Manila Film Festival (MMFF).

Last year, Eddie headlined **Joel Lamangan**'s "Deathrow," which was the entry of GMA Films to the MMFF.

"It would have been nice if we got to join the filmfest this year with our movie ('Bro')," Eddie says. "But I was not disappointed. In the filmfest, you compete with six other entries for the revenues whereas during a regular screening, you can dominate the box-office because there aren't as much movies being shown.

"We have an entire year next year to show the movie and I'm thankful that it is even the first film to be shown for the New Year."

In "Bro," the initial offering of MMG Films for 2002, Eddie gets to work for the first time with director **Roland Ledesma**, whose son, **Ronald Gan Ledesma**, is Eddie's costar in the movie.

"I don't have a problem working with first-time directors," Eddie says. "I've worked with other new directors in the past and didn't have a hard time with any of them."

In "Bro," Eddie is a veteran soldier who is an expert in combat and military operations. He is a sergeant in the military camp, while his son (Ronald) is a lieutenant and a graduate of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA).

"Since he (Ronald) is a PMA graduate, I salute to him inside the military camp," Eddie says. "But at home, he is the one who salutes to me."

Ronald, meanwhile, is thrilled no end after having worked with Eddie.

"I never expected that I would be working with *direk* Eddie one day," Ronald says. "I am one of his biggest fans. Initially, I was intimidated to work with him. But he was very supportive on the set and especially during the take. We had a great time working together."

Eddie and Ronald are joined in the movie by **Alma Concepcion, Eddie Gutierrez, Dante Rivero, Jean Saburit** and **Yam Ledesma**.

# Gary V headlines New Year's eve concert at The Fort

**SHOWS**

THE PLDT Group opens 2002 with a free New Year's Eve concert featuring the sensational youth band, Parokya Ni Edgar back to back with Gary Valenciano.

Dubbed as "Revolution 02," the party will be held at the Bonifacio Global City starting 8:30 tonight. This is the PLDT Group's way of thanking its millions of subscribers for supporting the company and making it the leader in telecommunications.

"Revolution 02" will not only light up the Bonifacio Global City with Parokya ni Edgar's youth sound and Gary V's electrifying performance, the event will also host the official countdown to the New Year and the most spectacular fireworks exploding against the Metro skyline.

Smart and Talk N' Text will give away one cell phone every 15 minutes during Gary's concert.

In line with the celebration will be a street party at the Fort Triangle, *al fresco* dining, and mini golf games at Par 43.

The Power of Convergence comes alive as PLDT hooks up with GMA Network and other media companies to bring the event outside of the Global City's boundaries.

The GMA Network media platform will promote the event via TV and radio nationwide while the award winning GMA News and Public Affairs team will do an hour-by-hour coverage allowing the whole country to be part of the festivities.

A webcast through the No. 1 Philippine website, Inq7 in coordination with GMA News Media and E-PLDT will allow every Filipino worldwide access to the party, as Talk N' Text and Smart will use text power to invite its millions of subscribers to the party.

### 'Baila'

CELEBRATE New Year's Eve in a Latino-Caribbean musical fiesta as renowned group Puro Ritmo performs at the Discovery Suites' newly opened Magellan and Columbus rooms, with a special performance by G Toengi.

Join the celebration of culture as multi-instrumentalist Bo Razon and his musical ensemble takes audiences on a musical journey, while sultry actress G Toengi dances to an array of authentic and traditional Salsa and Afro-Latin and Afro-Caribbean music.

Puro Ritmo began their career three years ago. It is the only group in the Philippines recognized for its renditions of Salsa and some other Pan-Caribbean and Afro-American musical genres.

Band members are Jojo Luz on conga and bongo, Jose Dufourt, Rachel Cunanan, Gary Rivas, Floro Sernande on flute, Ramon Mancio on trumpet and Sherwin Valencia on trombone.

Band leader Bo Razon has been mentor to a handful of protégés at the UP College of Music, teaching World Music for the past three years. He plays the bass anti various Cuban, Caribbean, Brazilian, African and South East Asian percussion instruments.

**PURO** Ritmo in a New Year's eve party at Discovery Suites.

"Baila!" is sponsored in part by Jardine Caldbeck Philippines. For ticket inquiries and reservations, call 635-2222 or visit Discovery Suites at 25 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

according to Associate Justice Raoul V. Victorino of the Sandiganbayan, chairman of the Golden Jubilarian

## AYALA CINEMAS
NOW SHOWING

YOUR 24-HOUR LINK TO ALL AYALA CINEMAS 729 - 7777
reserve seats through www.sureseats.com

All Digital Sound

**GLORIETTA 1** formerly QUAD

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAGONG BUWAN<br>In SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA<br>In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 3 | YAMASHITA<br>In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 4 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH<br>In DTS DIGITAL SOUND |

**GLORIETTA 4**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | SUSMARYOSEPI 4 FATHERS<br>In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 2 | YAMASHITA<br>In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 3 | BAHAY NI LOLA THX<br>In DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND |
| 4 | TATARIN<br>In DTS DIGITAL SOUND<br>Art Film |
| 5 | HUBOG<br>In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 6 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH<br>In DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND |
| 7 | BAGONG BUWAN<br>In DTS DIGITAL SOUND |

**GREENBELT**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | TATARIN<br>In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA<br>In SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND |
| 3 | YAMASHITA<br>In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 4 | REGINE AT THE MOVIES DEC. 28, 29, 30<br>Onstage |

**ALABANG TOWN CENTER**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | SUSMARYOSEPI 4 FATHERS THX<br>In DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND |
| 2 | BAGONG BUWAN<br>In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 3 | TATARIN<br>In DTS DIGITAL SOUND |
| 4 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH<br>In DTS DIGITAL SOUND |
| 5 | HUBOG<br>In DTS DIGITAL SOUND |

## MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

## MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING
EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

**Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA**
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DSD) | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 2 (SDDS) | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 (DTS) | TATARIN |
| 4 GOLD (DTS) | YAMASHITA |
| 5 GOLD (DOLBY) | YAMASHITA |
| 6 GOLD (SDDS) | HUBOG |
| 7 GOLD (DOLBY) | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 8 | YAMASHITA |
| 9 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 10 | HUBOG |

**Pearl Plaza Cinemas**
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | TATARIN |
| 3 (DTS) | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |
| 4 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 5 | 4 FATHERS |
| 6 (DTS) | BAHAY NI LOLA |

Golden Pearl THX

**Masagana CINEMA GOLD**
(Pasay) tel 831.6603

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | TATARIN |
| 2 | YAMASHITA |
| 3 | BAGONG BUWAN |

**starmall Movies**
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | HUBOG |
| 3 | 4 FATHERS |
| 4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 5 | TATARIN |

**METROPOLIS star**
543.3927 loc. 150

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | HUBOG |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |
| 4 | TATARIN |
| 5 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 6 | 4 FATHERS |
| 7 | |
| 8 | |

**PREMIERE CINEMA** THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2011 to 13

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |

**Center Plaza Cinema**
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | MONSTERS |

**FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.**
tel 930.9515

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | TATARIN |
| 2 | RESERVE |
| 3 | BAHAY NI LOLA |

**Spring**
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| A | HUBOG |

**Sunshine**
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | HUBOG |
| 2 | YAMASHITA |
| 3 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 4 | BAHAY NI LOLA |

**GOTESCO CINEMA**

**City**
(Manila) tel 734.8588

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DOLBY) | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 3 | TATARIN |
| 4 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 5 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 6 | |
| 7 (DTS) | |
| 8 (SDDS) | HUBOG |
| 9 (DOLBY) | BAHAY NI LOLA |

**Caloocan**
tel 362.3508

| | |
|---|---|
| 2 | BAGONG BUWAN |

**Grand Central**
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |
| 4 (SDDS) | HUBOG |
| 5 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 6 (DOLBY) | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 7 (DTS) | TATARIN |
| 8 | 4 FATHERS |
| 9 | DI KITA MA-REACH |

**Commonwealth**
tel 951.0083

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DTS) | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | HUBOG |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |
| 4 | TATARIN |
| 5 (SDDS) | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 6 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |
| 7 (DOLBY) | 4 FATHERS |
| 8 | BAHAY NI LOLA |

**Ortigas**
tel 656.6795

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 (DTS) | TATARIN |
| 4 | YAMASHITA |
| 5 (SDDS) | HUBOG |

**Universal**
(Manila) tel 733.2470

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |

**Sampaguita**
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |

**Dilson**
(Manila) tel 734.7724

| | |
|---|---|
| Dilson | TATARIN |
| Lords | TATARIN |
| Jennet | HUBOG |

**THE MARKETPLACE**
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 2 | TATARIN |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |

**Prima**
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

| | |
|---|---|
| 3 | TATARIN |

**Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto**
**SUPER CINERAMA**
tel 733.4238

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DOLBY) | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | HUBOG |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |
| 4 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 5 | TATARIN |

**New Divisoria Mall**
**DIVISORIA CINEMA**
tel 244.4619

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |
| 2 | YAMASHITA |
| 3 | TATARIN |
| 4 | CLOSED |
| 5 | CLOSED |
| 6 | HUBOG |

**Baclaran LRT**
**LRT CINEMA**
tel 512.0115

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DOLBY) | TATARIN |
| 2 | HUBOG |
| 3 | BAGONG BUWAN |

**Berma**
tel 879.2029

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |

**CitiMall**
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | YAMASHITA |

**CINEMA 2000**

**Cinema 2000 Target Mall**
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | TATARIN |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 (DTS) | YAMASHITA |

**Cinema 2000 Waltermart**
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 2 (DTS) | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 (DOLBY) | YAMASHITA |
| 4 | TATARIN |

**Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall**
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 (DOLBY) | YAMASHITA |
| 3 (DTS) | TATARIN |
| 4 | BAGONG BUWAN |

**Cinema 2000 Cinemagix**
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 | SOON TO OPEN |
| 4 | SOON TO OPEN |

**Cinema 2000 MovieTown**
(Tarlac)

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | HUBOG |
| 2 | TATARIN |
| 3 (DOLBY) | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 4 (DTS) | YAMASHITA |

**Lianas Cinema**
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (SDDS) | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |
| 2 | TATARIN |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |
| 4 (DTS) | BAGONG BUWAN |

**Lianas MovieCity**
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DOLBY) | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 (DTS) | TATARIN |
| 4 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |
| 5 | BAGONG BUWAN |

**Olivarez Tri-Cinema**
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 3 | TATARIN |

**Olivarez Los Baños**
tel (049) 249-2558

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |

**Olivarez Tagaytay**
tel (046) 413.0311

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | YAMASHITA |
| 3 | BAGONG BUWAN |

**Morales Cinema**
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 2 | TATARIN |
| 3 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |

**Cabuyao**
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4806

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DTS) | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 (DTS) | TATARIN |

**Emperor**
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | HUBOG |
| 2 | HINDI KITA MA-REACH |
| 3 | BAHAY NI LOLA |

**Fiesta World Mall**
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | HUBOG |
| 3 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 4 | TATARIN |

**Jade Cinema**
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DOLBY EX) | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |
| 4 (DTS ES) | TATARIN |

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

CMG INTERNATIONAL
Mile Long Compound, Amorsolo cor. Dela Rosa Sts., Makati City
Tel. No.: 700-8314 to 15
E-Mail: premiere@[illegible]
For VIP, Gold, Silver membership, call: 7[illegible]-3142 to 56
For reservations, call: 751-2010 to 13

PREMIERE CINEMA
THX
NOW SHOWING
Shake, rattle and scream this Christmas!!
BAHAY NI LOLA

## ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD
State-Of-The-Art-Cinemas
NOW SHOWING
e-mail: htc@netasia.mnl.net
http://www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

**GALLERIA** 633-6115-16 / 633-7041 loc. 279

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 4 | HUBOG |
| 5 | TATARIN |
| 6 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 7 | DI KA MAREACH |
| 8 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 9 | HUBOG |
| 10 | DI KA MAREACH |

**ERMITA** 536-7809 TO 12

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 4 | DI KA MAREACH |
| 5 | TATARIN |
| 6 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 7 | HUBOG |

**METRO EAST** 632-9118-16 / 633-7041

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | HUBOG |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 | DI KA MAREACH |
| 4 | YAMASHITA |
| 5 | TATARIN |
| 6 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 7 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 8 | BAHAY NI LOLA |

**NOVALICHES** 936-3229 TO 31

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | HUBOG |
| 2 | TATARIN |
| 3 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 4 | DI KA MAREACH |
| 5 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 6 | SUSMARYOSEP ( 4 FATHERS) |
| 7 | YAMASHITA |
| 8 | BAGONG BUWAN |

**IMUS** ( 046 ) 471-9199

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | DI KA MAREACH |
| 2 | SUSMARYOSEP (4 FATHERS) |
| 3 | TATARIN |
| 4 | HUBOG |
| 5 | YAMASHITA |
| 6 | BAHAY NI LOLA |

**BACOLOD** (034) 441-0453 / 0458

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | HUBOG |
| 3 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 4 | ROCKSTAR |
| 5 | PAGDATING NG PANAHON |
| 6 | MUSKETEER |

**ILOILO** ( 033 ) 336- 9077 / 9079

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 2 | YAMASHITA |
| 3 | HUBOG |
| 4 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 5 | TATARIN |
| 6 | ROCKSTAR |

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

## THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

| ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101 | |
|---|---|
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1 | PAGDATING NG PANAHON |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2 | SUTLA (RE-ISSUE) |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS) | MUSKETEER |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS) | HARRY POTTER |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS) | EARTHQUAKE |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY) | MVP |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY) | SUMMER CATCH |
| FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY) | MASAKIT HUWAG IPILIT |
| FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY) | PISNGI |
| FIESTA CARNIVAL | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| NEW FRONTIER | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| **MANILA** | |
| EASTERN | |
| MAXIM | CLOSED |
| MIRAMAR | DALAWA SI EBA / HIYAS SA PARAISO |
| ODEON | BAGONG BUWAN |
| ODEON-2 | YAMASHITA |
| ROBEN | HUBOG |
| TANDEM-1 | SEX MEDUSA |
| TANDEM-2 | SEX EDUCATION |
| TIMES | PUKYUTAN / STORY OF US |
| **QUEZON CITY** | |
| ACT-1 | SENSUAL ISLAND |
| ACT-2 | KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT |
| ACT-3 | CLOSED |
| ACT-4 | CLOSED |
| CORONET-2 | ORIGINAL SIN |
| QUEZON-1 | HUBOG |
| REMAR | BAGONG BUWAN |
| REMAR-2 | YAMASHITA |
| **NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA** | |
| A | YAMASHITA |
| B | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| C | HUBOG |
| **MANDALUYONG CITY** | |
| SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL | 635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70 |
| CINEMA-1 | HARRY POTTER |
| CINEMA-2 | THE MUSKETEER |
| **CAINTA RIZAL** | |
| STA. LUCIA EAST | (681-5401 TO 19) |
| CINEMA-1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| CINEMA-2 | HUBOG |
| CINEMA-3 | YAMASHITA |
| CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) | DI KITA MA-REACH |
| CINEMA-5 (DTS) | TATARIN |
| CINEMA-6 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| CINEMA-7 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| CINEMA-8 | HUBOG |
| CINEMA-9 (DTS) | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL) | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| CINEMA-11 (SDDS) | YAMASHITA |
| CINEMA-12 | TATARIN |
| CINEMA-14 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| CINEMA-15 | FOUR FATHERS |
| **LORES** | |
| CINEMA-2 | CLOSED |
| CINEMA-3 | CLOSED |
| **POWER PLANT CINEMA** | |
| CINEMA-1 | HUBOG |
| CINEMA-2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| CINEMA-3 | TATARIN |
| CINEMA-4 | YAMASHITA |
| CINEMA-5 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| CINEMA-6 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| **UNIWIDE METROMALL** | |
| (LAS PIÑAS) | |
| CINEMA-1 | |
| CINEMA-2 | |
| CINEMA-4 | |
| **UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL** | |
| (PARAÑAQUE) | |
| CINEMA-1 | ALIPIN NG TUKSO |
| CINEMA-2 | THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE |
| CINEMA-4 | ALAMID |

# Collins set for 5th marriage

LONDON—Hollywood star Joan Collins, 68, is to marry her 36-year-old boyfriend early next year, her spokesperson was quoted as saying in Britain's press.

Collins will wed Peruvian born-Percy Gibson, her fifth husband, at a ceremony in London in February, the spokesperson was reported as saying.

Gibson, a theatre company manager, proposed to the screen actress in May while the couple were in New York. *AFP*

## SM CINEMA
SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 633-9999
NOW SHOWING

**SM CITY BACOOR**
4173868

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | TATARIN |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |
| 4 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 5 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 6 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 7 | 4 FATHERS |
| 8 | HUBOG |

**SM CENTERPOINT**
7149522 -7161416

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 2 | TATARIN |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |
| 4 | HUBOG |
| 5 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 6 | 4 FATHERS |
| 7 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 8 | DI KITA MA-REACH |
| 9 | YAMASHITA |
| 10 | BAHAY NI LOLA |

**SM CITY FAIRVIEW**
9350749

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | DI KITA MA-REACH |
| 3 | TATARIN |
| 4 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 5 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 6 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 7 | HUBOG |
| 8 | YAMASHITA |
| 9 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 10 | TATARIN |
| 11 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 12 | 4 FATHERS |

**SM CITY MANILA**
5239240

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 | TATARIN |
| 4 | YAMASHITA |
| 5 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 6 | HUBOG |
| 7 | TATARIN |
| 8 | DI KITA MA-REACH |
| 9 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 10 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 11 | 4 FATHERS |
| 12 | YAMASHITA |

**SM MEGAMALL**
6331901 • 6329401

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| 1 | TATARIN |
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**SM TUTUBAN**
2514302

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DIGITAL dts SOUND
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND • EX

**SM CITY NORTH EDSA**
9295452

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| 7 | 4 FATHERS |
| 8 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 9 | YAMASHITA |
| 10 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 11 | DI KITA MA-REACH |
| 12 | BAGONG BUWAN |

**SM SOUTHMALL**
8066088 • 8066782

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| 3 | YAMASHITA |
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| 5 | 4 FATHERS |
| 6 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
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| 9 | YAMASHITA |
| 10 | HUBOG |

**SM GUADALUPE COMM'L**
8820905

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| 1 | HUBOG |
| 2 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 3 | YAMASHITA |

**SM CEBU**
2313876

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| 1 | HARRY POTTER |
| 2 | MUSKETEER |
| 3 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 4 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 5 | ROCKSTAR |
| 6 | HUBOG |
| 7 | TATARIN |

**SM ILOILO**
3209422

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|---|---|
| 1 | HUBOG |
| 2 | CLOSED |
| 3 | HARRY POTTER |
| 4 | YAMASHITA |
| 5 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 6 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 7 | CLOSED |
| 8 | TATARIN |

**SM PAMPANGA**
7128015

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**SM SUCAT**
8294975

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| 1 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
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| 3 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 4 | YAMASHITA |

**SM DAVAO**

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| 1 | YAMASHITA |
| 2 | BAHAY NI LOLA |
| 3 | HUBOG |
| 4 | BAGONG BUWAN |
| 5 | TATARIN |
| 6 | MUSKETEER |

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

# ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

# HAPPY NEW YEAR!

KRIS AND TELL

*Kris Aquino*

FOR my last column for the year, let me expound on the greeting Happy New Year.

For those who are quite content with how life has been treating them, I quote from **Andrew Matthew**'s "Happiness in a Nutshell:" "When Life is sweet, and that little voice says: 'It can't last!' Tell yourself: 'Maybe it's about to get better!'"

For the year, 2002, don't be embarrassed that you are happy. Don't fear that it may not last. Rather, embrace the blessings and realize that the Provider of all those blessings will never run out of stock. He does appreciate gratitude and the spreading and sharing of goodwill. Keeping that in mind and in practice, look forward to even better days ahead.

For those who are suffering now, whether emotionally, physically or financially, I quote from my favorite little uplifting book, "The Language of Happiness:" "In the midst of winter, I finally learned that there was in me an invincible summer." —**Albert Camus**.

I first shared this text with my dear friend **Biboy**, whose business, a small flower and gift shop called Madiraka on Morato, had to close down after nearly six months of profitable operation because of some belatedly discovered Quezon City ordinance violations. Biboy was initially crushed by the turn of events, especially because it came right before the Christmas buying season, but he told me that the quote helped open his eyes to the innate resilience of his spirit. In fact, he's now scouting around for a new location and this time around he is making very sure that everything will be in order when he reopens in the first quarter of 2002.

This quote I now similarly share with **Louie**, my kindhearted and patient editor. While his body heals, I hope he realizes that he has an abundance of inner strength and a truly unbreakable spirit.

For those who have been in a quest to find that perfect mate, maybe this song from The CompanY will light the flame of hope in your heart. It's titled "Baka Ikaw" from their new album, "Storybook."

*"Hinihintay sa buhay ko*
*Isang minamahal*
*Ngunit habang hinihintay*
*Lalong tumatagal*
*Malapit nang mapagod*
*Pero teka, sandali lang*
*May sasabihin ako sa'yo*

*"Hindi kaya ikaw*
*Baka ikaw na nga*
*Meron ka bang nararamdaman?*
*Akala ko'y wala*
*Parang ngayon sa tingin ko, ikaw ba 'yon?*
*Siguro nga . . .*
*Ano kaya . . .*
*Baka ikaw!"*

This song is again by my music composition idols, the incomparable team of **Moy Ortiz** and **Edith Gallardo**. The lyrics say it all, directed to all of us who are still single: Don't fret, don't worry, he or she will come, just don't rush it, don't get tired, and don't barricade your heart!

Lastly, to everybody reading this, a quote from a beautiful Happy New Year card I received. Let it inspire all of us immensely in 2002.

"It's not where or when you arrive, it's making the journey that counts. Wishing you a year filled with discovery!"

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THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

DEC. 31 (MONDAY)
10:00 PM - NEW YEAR'S MASS

JAN. 01 (TUESDAY)
4:00 PM - Dragon Dance
Clowns on Stilts, Fire Eaters
Jugglers, Magicians
Hataw Sayaw Street Dancing

6:00 PM - FIREWORKS DISPLAY

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international & traditional rides for children and adults.

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# Clash in the Filipino psyche

VIEWFINDER

*Nestor U. Torre*

WHEN we heard that **Tikoy Aquiluz** was making film based on **Nick Joaquin**'s stage play, "Tatarin," we wondered why the director had chosen that particular script, which is not really among Joaquin's best ("Mga Ama, Mga Anak" is better—somebody should turn it into a movie, too).

After seeing "Tatarin" on the movie screen during the ongoing Metro filmfest, we understood why Aguiluz was so taken with its story. Its exotic and erotic elements make for great visuals and sexy scenes.

In addition, the script says a lot about the clash in the Filipino psyche between our elemental past and the repression and conservatism that "civilization" and western religion bring.

These are potent themes that, if organically and dynamically limned, would have said a lot about us as a people pulled apart by contradictory impulses.

However, the movie does not develop them fully. Instead, it stretches its thin material, slowing down its tempo and causing viewers' attention to wander.

The film chooses as its storm center a repressed wife played by **Dina Bonnevie**. Typical of women in the 1920s, she is expected by her husband (**Edu Manzano**) to bend her will to his. Brought up in a world full of rules imposed by men, she lives a sere and passionless life—even in bed.

Thus, when the Tatarin's celebration of woman as passionate life force comes to town, Dina's character is ripe for the picking—and freeing. Especially since her cook (**Rica Peralejo**) has been tapped as this year's medium, through whose nubile, young body the spirit of sensual freedom throbs and courses with wild abandon.

The Tatarin ritual takes many minutes to unfold onscreen, but its effect is not as passionate as intended, because it looks choreographed instead of being improvised as the erotic spirit moves its revelers. This may have worked well as a dance on the CCP stage, but on film, it looks too arty and "produced."

This is a grievous error because it prevents the long sequence's erotic and elemental impulses from peaking. Thus, when Dina's character achieves liberation, the point is made in relative abstraction, and fails to make the strong impact on viewers that it intends.

Still, the movie does end on a high note as Edu realizes that he loves his wife more than ever, now that she has dared to assert herself as a woman, and kisses her foot in rapt devotion.

On point of performance, no single character is memorable because the actors aren't given much to work with. They do act up a storm, but it's pretty much about the same things, over and over—repression, strictness, longing for freedom, the explosive force of unbridled sensuality, etc.

So, "Tatarin" can be appreciated for its exoticism, eroticism, production design and meaningful themes, but it doesn't hold together all that well as a unified film, and as an empathetic viewing experience. Like its protagonist, the movie needs more spontaneous, elemental urgency—and fever rules, as well.

### Feedback

FROM **EC Estrada**: "Where have you seen a member of a sponsoring company eligible to vie for a prize offered in a contest, which is what 'Who Wants to Be A Millionaire' is?

"I am referring to your revelation that **Sharon Cuneta**, a Viva star, is the second millionaire in this Viva TV show. Only in the Philippines!"

### Promo extended

SKYCABLE and Home Cable's Araw-Araw Pasko promo has been extended up to Feb. 8, 2002. Daily and weekly draws have been extended to Jan. 27.

With the extension of the promo, SkyCable and Home Cable will be giving away prizes to more than 18,000 subscribers. Daily winners get a P300 gift check and weekly winners get a P1,000 gift check.

The grand prize is a Mitsubishi Galant. Call 636-7591 or 727-4663.

### 'Bathing Brooke'

CATCH "Bathing Brooke: The Making of Brooke Burke's 2002 Special Edition Swimsuit Calendar" today, Dec. 31, at 8:30 p.m. on E! Philippines.

The special-edition calendar was photographed while Brooke traveled around the world as host of E!'s "Wild On" series, and features her 12 favorite destinations, including Ibiza, Bali, New Zealand and Brazil. \

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| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---|---|---|
| HUBOG - R 18<br>12:00, 2:10, 4:20, 6:30 | BAHAY NI LOLA - P 13<br>11:30, 1:40, 3:50, 6:00 | TATARIN - R 18<br>11:15, 1:30, 3:45, 6:00 |
| **4** | **5** | **6** |
| YAMASHITA - GP<br>11:15, 1:35, 3:55, 6:15 | BAGONG BUWAN - P 13<br>12:30, 3:10, 5:50 | BAGONG BUWAN - P 13<br>10:45, 1:20, 3:55, 6:30 |

Matinee, P80, Mon.-Fri.,11:00 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.

**'CROSSOVER PRESENTS'**

Joey Generoso of Side A opens the "Crossover Presents" series at the Captain's Bar of the Mandarin Oriental on Jan. 10. Joining Joey G. onstage is singer-comedienne Mitch Valdez, who will perform hilarious sketches with a repertoire of classic tunes. The show is under the musical direction of Gerard Salonga, with talented musicians Mel Villena on saxophone, Bobby Taylo on bass, Cesar Aguas on guitar and Roy Merçado on drums. The Opera provides back-up vocals. For ticket inquiries, call Ticket World at 891-5610 or Mandarin at 750-8888.

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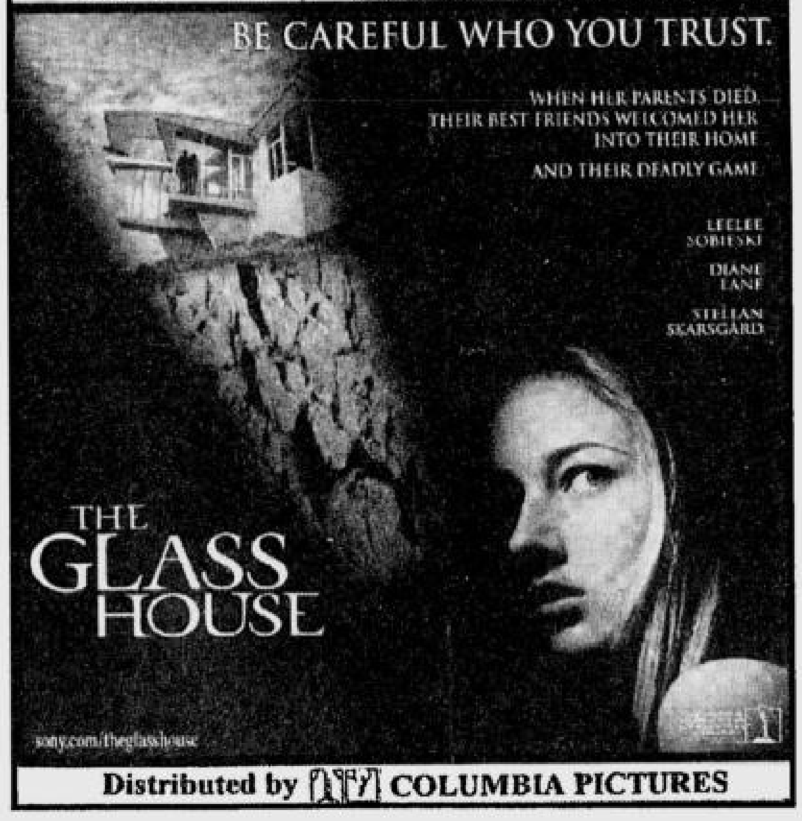

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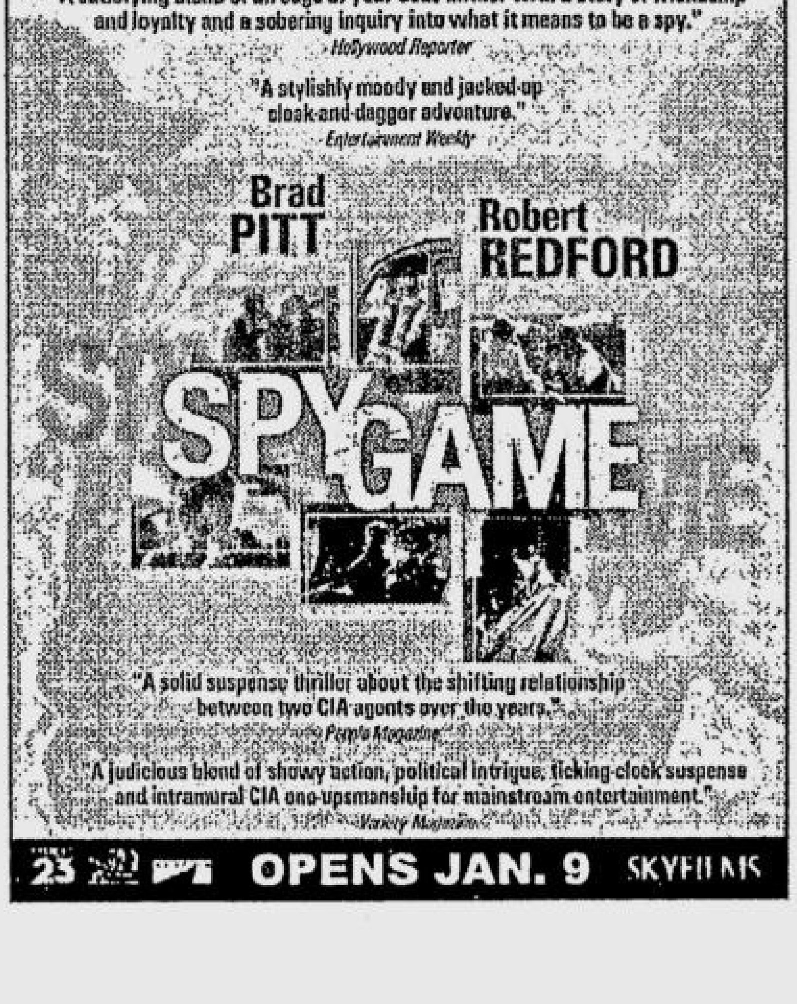
"A satisfying blend of an edge-of-your-seat thriller with a story of friendship and loyalty and a sobering inquiry into what it means to be a spy."
- Hollywood Reporter

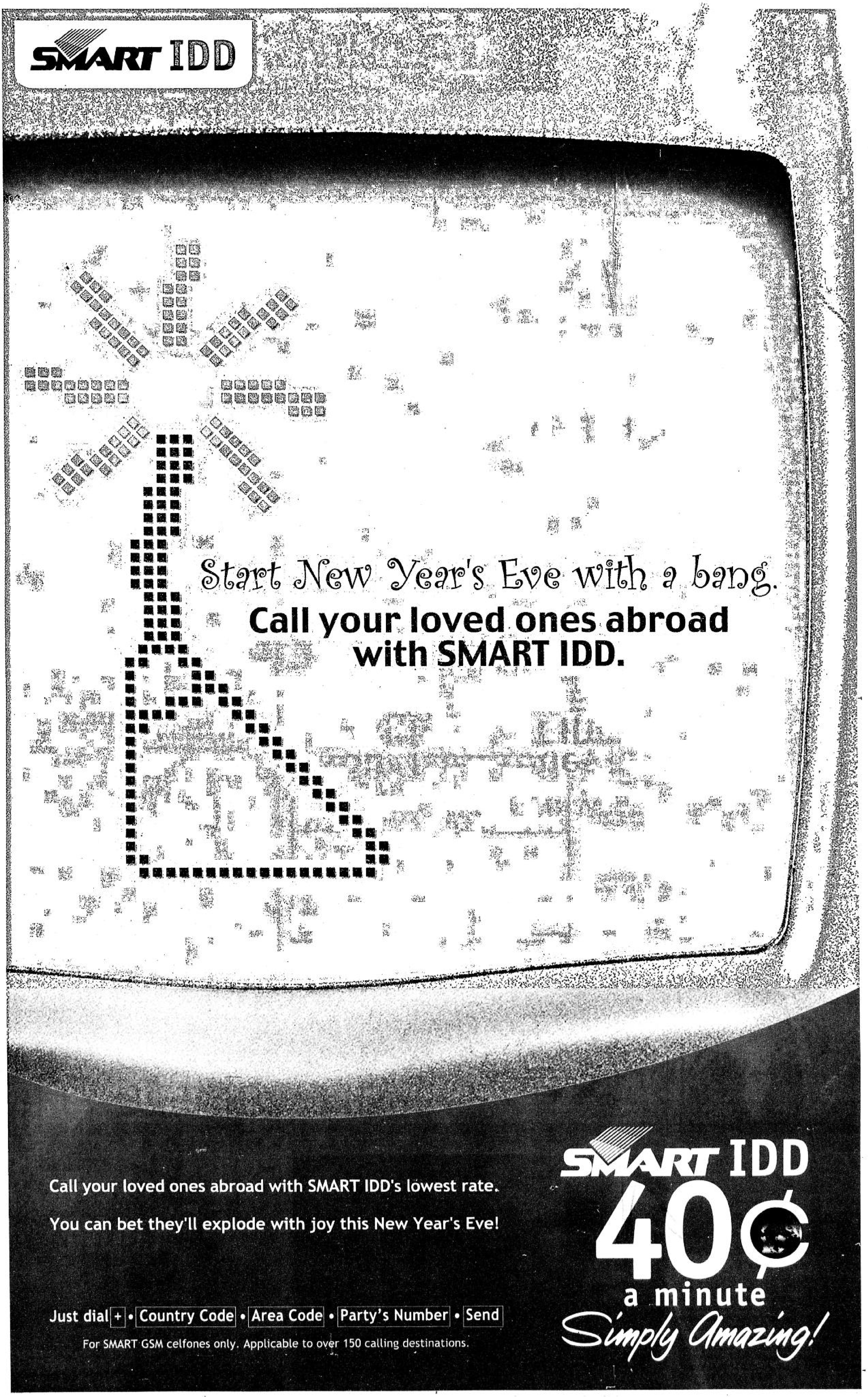
"A stylishly moody and jacked-up cloak-and-dagger adventure."
- Entertainment Weekly



"A solid suspense thriller about the shifting relationship between two CIA agents over the years."
- People Magazine

"A judicious blend of showy action, political intrigue, ticking-clock suspense and intramural CIA one-upsmanship for mainstream entertainment."
- Variety Magazine

23 OPENS JAN. 9 SKYFILMS



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# BOP gap to fall below $100M in '02

## INDICATORS

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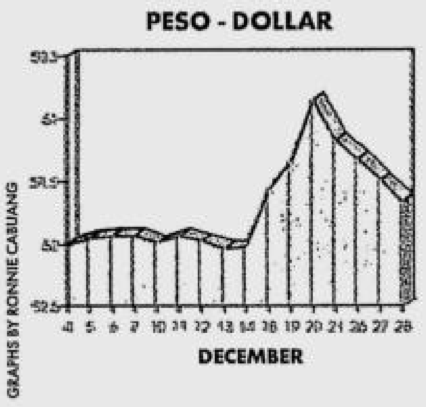


**Peso-Dollar Rate**

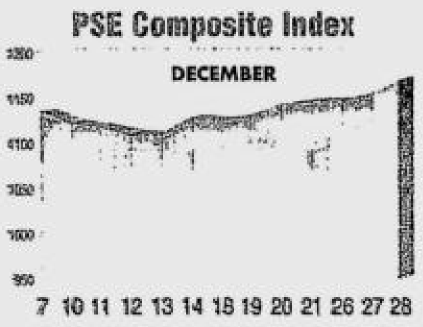
₱51.665 = $1
As of 5 p.m.,
Dec. 28, 2001

¥131.46 = $1
As of 5 p.m.,
Dec. 28, 2001

GOLD:$277.50/278.00
per ounce Hong Kong,
Dec. 28, 2001

### STOCK MARKET

## Shares up



SHARES ended higher Friday, the last trading day of the year, as portfolio fund managers bid up prices before closing their books for 2001, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index closed up 15.22 points, or 1.3 percent at 1,168.08, adding to Thursday's 0.6-percent rise.

The market managed to end above its 1,150-point immediate support, though its overall performance for this year proved disappointing, with the main index registering a 22-percent decline from its 2000 closing level of 1,494.50.

Aiding the index rise was blue chip Globe Telecom, which rose P50, or 7.9 percent, at P680, boosted by several cross sales involving 1.29 million Globe Telecom shares.

Analysts said Friday's rally was expected. Some of them said it was unlikely the rally would extend up to next week when trading resumes after the holidays. The others were hopeful that the rally would be sustained.

Gainers led decliners 50 to 30 last Friday, while 37 issues were unchanged. **AP**

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas said it was expecting a balance of payment deficit of less than $100 million for 2002, or way below the $1.3 billion estimated BOP gap this year, despite projections that exports will remain weak during the period.

In a press briefing, BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the improved BOP outlook for 2002 was attributed to the expected easing of government financing requirements and the influx of foreign investments.

The export sector, however, is still seen to post zero growth in 2002. Several economists, however, are expecting a rebound in the United States economy by mid-year which can dramatically improve opportunities for Philippine exports.

The BOP is an account of the foreign exchange outflows and inflows arising from various economic transactions—including trade, investments and loans—between the country and the rest of the world.

From January to October this year, the BOP deficit reached $1.03 billion as the country's 10-month export earnings dropped by 14 percent year-on-year to $26.87 billion. This was attributed to the slump in the demand for electronics, the country's top dollar earner, due to the global economic slowdown.

BUENAVENTURA

But Buenaventura said one of the factors that would make such a dramatic improvement in the country's BOP possible was the front-loading of the government's financing requirements in the first quarter of the year.

Also, he said that the $540-million investments expected to be infused by Japanese brewer Kirin Co. Brewery Ltd. to acquire a 15-percent stake in food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. would boost the country's dollar inflows. The funds from the Japanese company are expected to come in by March after the buy-in deal is ratified by the SMC stockholders in a special meeting to be held in late February.

Buenaventura also said the expected influx of foreign direct investments into the information and communication technology (ICT) sector, one of the priority areas identified by President Macapagal-Arroyo, would also help boost the country's BOP position.

"There will also be some improvements in portfolio investments, mostly on fixed income instruments and selective equities," he said.

But former Finance Secretary and concurrent Asian Institute of Management president Roberto de Ocampo, who chaired a session during a recent Asian Development Bank workshop, said the investment outlook in the country for next year was still depressing.

"The conclusion that was presented was that right now, private capital flows, particularly from the traditional sectors like pension funds, are completely skittish about investing in emerging markets. In fact, they didn't want to touch it with a 10-mile pole, and we're among those emerging markets."

Whatever private capital flows are heading to Asia, according to De Ocampo, are being siphoned off by China, which has been recently accepted into the World Trade Organization.

"It is important for the Philippines to start seriously discussing our niche in this part of the world with respect to China because the foreign investment figures that were shown, showed that most of the funds are going to China. We have to assess our competitiveness with respect to investments and exports, " he said.

# 2 bulk terminal facilities to rise in Subic

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

TWO local bulk terminal operators are spending a total of P1.5 billion to put up separate container facilities for grains and fertilizer in the Subic Bay Freeport Economic Zone.

Mega Equipment Corp. will invest P1 billion in Subic to put up a bulk grains terminal for corn, sorghum and soybean that will be sold in the domestic market. Tacoma will pump in P500 million for a bulk fertilizer facility to stockpile urea and NPK (nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium) fertilizer for the domestic market.

Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority chair Felicito Payumo said the two projects would have a big impact on the agriculture sector because they would make available animal feeds and fertilizers at substantially lower costs.

Payumo said that by bringing in the grains and fertilizers by bulk through Panamax vessels, shipping costs would be slashed by as much as $5 per ton and these savings would benefit feedmillers, local livestock producers and farmers.

Payumo said the proponents could also realize savings from their shipping costs because they do not have to pay the tax and duties for their shipments since they were locators in the Freeport. Payumo said the companies would only pay the duties and taxes when the goods were brought out of Subic's gates and sold to local buyers.

Payumo said the proponents chose Subic as the site for their bulk terminals because of its central location and deep water harbor. Mega Equipment and Tacoma have also set their sights on SBMA's plan to develop two port terminals and expand its existing port.

The bulk terminals are also expected to benefit from the anticipated cut in travel time to Subic from Metro Manila and Central Luzon with the completion of the Subic-Clark expressway.

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| BMW 318ia Exec | 2,165,000 | 433,000 | 44,514 |
| BMW 325ia | 2,600,000 | 520,000 | 53,465 |
| BMW 325ia Exec | 2,700,000 | 540,500 | 56,856 |

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## A GOOD IDEA

# OCBC Securities to resume RP operations

**By Elena R. Torrijos**

OCBC Securities plans to resume its operations in the country, but it has sought government approval to conduct part of its business from its headquarters in Singapore.

Securities and Exchange Commission Chair Lilia Bautista said the foreign broker's move was a good idea, but the corporate watchdog still had to study the legal and technical issues involved.

Bautista added that the Philippine Stock Exchange would have to be consulted before it could approve OCBC's proposal.

Bautista noted that questions on how it would transmit orders and provide clients with access to documents would have to be addressed. She noted, however, that the Supreme Court and the e-commerce law consider electronic documents as valid and legally binding.

OCBC, along with Nomura Securities, Keppel Philippines Securities and Magnum International Securities, is one of the brokers that has ceased operations but has expressed plans to resume operations in 2002.

These brokers have already applied with the SEC for the renewal of their licenses, subject to their meeting requirements such as the minimum net capital of P5 million.

This year saw many foreign brokerage houses pulling out of the Philippines as revenues from thin stock trading were no longer enough to pay for their operations.

Foreign brokers said they decided to suspend or cease their trading operations in the country because of the failure of the stock market to generate a critical volume level necessary to break even.

This was attributed mainly to negative local and foreign developments.

Documents showed that there were 184 stockbrokers, of which eight were inactive, 23 were under voluntary suspension and four have ceased operations.

# Shell seeking review of environment law

**By Ronnel W. Domingo**

PILIPINAS Shell Petroleum Corp. is asking for a review of a provision of the Clean Air Act on the reduction of aromatic content in gasoline products, although it maintains that it is confident of meeting the law's requirements.

Pilipinas Shell country chair Oscar Reyes said in a news briefing last week that the company had begun talks with the government concerning a review of the law's aromatics standard.

The Clean Air Act requires that the aromatic and benzene contents of gasoline available in 2003 be reduced from 45 percent and 4 percent to 35 percent and 2 percent.

"We are not asking for a deferment of the provision's implementation, but for a review of whether that has a real positive value," Reyes clarified.

He said the experience of other countries regarding the matter should be a significant benchmark.

Reyes explained that an environment-friendly quality of gasoline could be achieved other than the levels prescribed by law.

The country's clean air law is one of the strictest in the region, he said.

"We have to look at a win-win situation for all, including the consumers and the environment," he said.

Reyes stressed, however, that Pilipinas Shell was prepared to comply with the provisions of the law, including the new requirements on the sulfur content of diesel.

The law also mandates the sulfur content of available automotive diesel in 2004 reduced from the current 0.2 percent to 0.05 percent.

Reyes also said Shell had no need of new facilities as its refinery in Batangas was capable of producing compliant products.

# Landbank to lend ₱3B

LAND Bank of the Philippines has said it will augment by at least P3 billion its loans for the agriculture sector in 2002.

In an interview, Landbank first vice president Wilfredo Maldia said the Landbank was earmarking money to support long-term small to medium-scale agricultural projects and low-cost housing.

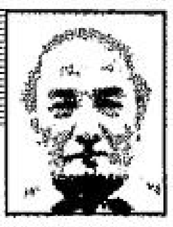
Maldia said Landbank would course these loans through rural banks, which were more accessible to farmers with their 1,100 branches nationwide.

Landbank set aside some P12 billion for small farmers and fishing communities in 2001, and around P9 billion were allocated for large companies involved in the agricultural sector.

Maldia reported that in the first quarter, Landbank released over P574 million for a rediscounting facility for small farmers. *Christine A. Gaylican*

# Why the Moro has been 'discriminated' against

## Questions of Policies



*Honesto C. General*

DEAN Jorge Bocobo started his column on Dec. 24 with: "Muslims in the Philippines and Negroes in America have one thing in common. They are victims of discrimination under a tyranny of the majority that should not exist in any just and humane society. Negroes in America have endured centuries of racism and discrimination under the institution of slavery and its long-lasting aftermath. Filipino Muslims have also suffered discrimination under the Spaniards, Americans, Japanese and the Christian majority with its series of dysfunctional governments in Manila."

Let us take a quick trip through history. From 1768 to 1898, the Moro thoroughly terrorized the archipelago. Twice a year when the winds blew northward, fleets as large as a hundred paraus manned by 3,000 heavily armed Moros sailed from Jolo and Cotabato to raid distant and undefended coastal towns as far north as the Ilocos.

Bicol was a favorite hunting ground. The Moros came up Albay Gulf to claim the yearly rice harvest. They entered San Miguel Bay in Camarines Sur, went up the Bicol River all the way to Lake Bato. Then, in 1814, a Moro fleet was routed by a provincial armada of Albayanos. The Moro never set foot on Bicol again. The ensuing peace ushered in an unprecedented economic progress. Coupled with the discovery by the US navy of abaca fiber, Albay became the richest province.

The Moro's prized booty was human. Every man, woman and child captured was brought to be sold at the Jolo slave market. It was estimated that 300,000 captives were traded in Jolo in 130 years of slave trading. Compared to the slave raiders of old, the Abu Sayyaf of today looks like a bunch of mischievous grade school kids.

The Samals of Tawi-Tawi were the fiercest. So, in 1848, after three years of preparation, the Spanish governor general himself led a fleet that invaded the island. Every structure was leveled to the ground, all its 8,000 coconut trees were cut down. Most of the men were away on a slave raid, but the invasion force killed about 500 Samalas and captured another 500. The captives were brought to Echague, Cagayan, far from the sea, and taught to plant tobacco. The Samals resettled in Tawi-Tawi. In 1858, the Spaniards went back to devastate the island again. That did not stop the slave raids. What finally stopped the Moros was the steam-powered gunboat. Discrimination? Self-defense.

When Capt. John Pershing (later to command the American Expeditionary Force in France during World War I) arrived in Lanao in 1903 to take the post of governor of the Moro province (Lanao, Cotabato, Davao, Zamoanga and Sulu), he decreed that no Filipino should work as a slave to anyone. Also, to teach the Moros the elements of government, everybody, including the datu, should pay taxes. He pursued this twin policy relentlessly for 10 years. Every datu and his men who resisted were either captured or killed. In the end, the Sultan of Sulu and the Sultan of Cotabato took their oaths of allegiance to the American flag. Discrimination? Equality.

During the Commonwealth era, farmers from Luzon and the Visayas were egged to migrate to Mindanao. Not only were they to populate Mindanao, but they were to serve as examples to the Moros on how to farm. It never worked, and the Moros never learned. Today, the best farms in Mindanao are owned and run by non-Moros. Discrimination? The work ethic: You earn what you work for.

Why should anyone complain if the Japanese treated the Moro badly during the Occupation? The Japanese treated everybody with equal barbarity.

From 1956 to 1960, I ran the Mindanao District Office of the Insular-FGU Insurance Group. One of my most rigid instructions was: Do not insure a Moro. The Moro's shorter life span was a minor technical problem. The major problem was identity. If he died, identifying the cadaver and the beneficiary was next to impossible because there was no birth certificate and no marriage contract.

Today, that rule is still enforced by every life insurance company. As a result, if the Moro family breadwinner dies, his widow and children could find themselves destitute. And the Moro contributes nothing into the reserve funds of life insurance companies that are among the largest sources of investible funds that fuel the economy. Discrimination? Sound business sense.

This space was provided by Philippine Daily Inquirer, a Corporate Partner of WWF-Philippines.
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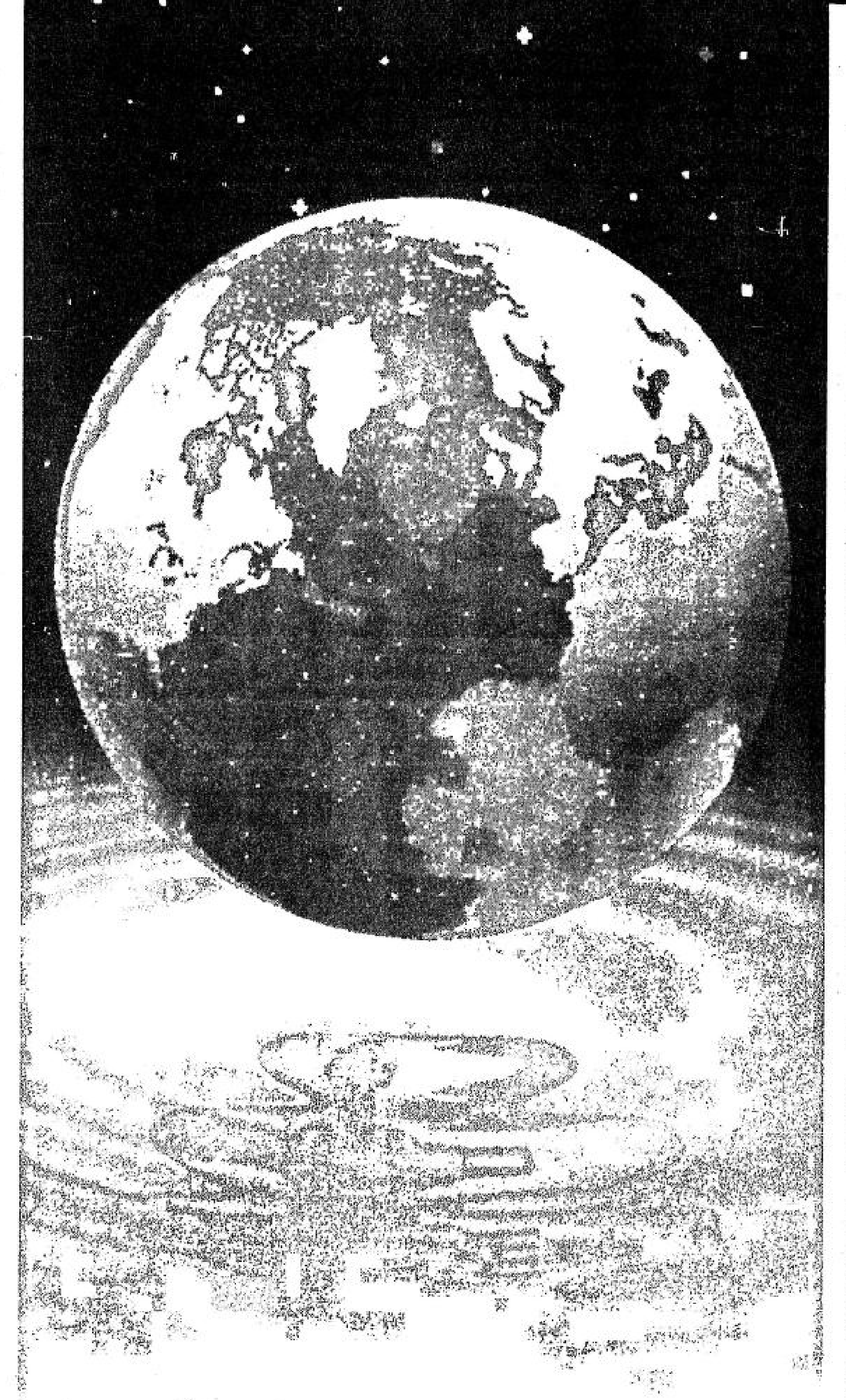
# 2001: The way IT was



**BY ERWIN G. OLIVA**

JUST like the major turning points in history, the year 2001 will be remembered for Sept. 11 or 9-11—the day terrorists brought down the World Trade Center, America's symbol of financial prosperity and economic power.

That attack sent ripples of uncertainty worldwide. Stock markets in various countries showed signs of further weakening, while Third World economies showed more cracks. Meanwhile, investors held on to their money, while companies tightened their belts all the more.

In the high-tech industry, the year 2001 was discouraging. Executives could not look any further than six months as tech stocks plummeted. Soon, announcements of massive job cuts followed. The high-tech industry, in general, was in the doldrums as the low demand for personal computers forced computer makers like Hewlett-Packard and Compaq to merge.

The year 2001 is, indeed, the period when high-tech was down, down, down—but not out. Not yet, at least.

### 'Script kiddies' attack

The year 2001 was marked by numerous hacking incidents involving local and international websites. Going by monikers like Eyestrain, dcoder, AsianPride, string_h, and the like, these so-called crackers (popularly known as hackers) defaced Philippine-based websites almost at will.

Their brand of destruction, however, is nothing compared to what their counterparts in other countries are doing. They usually take advantage of security holes found in today's operating systems. Their favorite targets are computer servers running Microsoft systems. An archive of Filipino websites defaced by Pinoy crackers may be viewed at www.ezroot.com/archive.

Late this year, a war between two hacker groups—AsianPride Crew and Locusts.org—ensued.

The battle heated up as both engaged in a word war. Locusts.org, however, surprised AsianPride when it announced it was going "legit." AsianPride reacted, tagging Locusts.org as media whores who only wanted publicity.

Meanwhile, AsianPride member dcoder continued defacing local websites, the latest of which was local mobile telephone company Globe Telecom's website.

In Malaysia, a hacker called "senn-x" defaced the country's Road Transport Department website early this year. The attack came nearly two months after websites of the Malaysian parliament and the University of Technology of Malaysia were defaced.

### Marriage of two giants

Bowing to pressures from an industry where there is less and less demand for personal computers worldwide, computer makers Hewlett-Packard and Compaq announced a merger agreement in September to boost their position in the shrinking hardware market. The marriage, if it pushes through next year, will create an $87-billion company, just h billion shy of IBM's $88-billion worth.

Under the terms of the merger, the board of directors of each company have agreed to a stock swap, where Compaq shareholders will receive 0.6325 of a newly issued HP share for each share of Compaq, giving the merger a total value of around $25 billion.

The agreement will also allow HP to own about 64 percent of the merged company. The new HP will be structured around four operating units. These units include imaging and printing, access devices, IT infrastructure, business and services (outsourcing). According to HP officials at the time of the announcement, the marriage will generate cost savings of around $2.5 billion annually for the new company. The merger is expected to be completed in the first half of 2002, and combined operations will begin by fiscal year 2003. The new company will be based in Palo Alto, California.

Tentatively called "the new HP," the marriage has faced opposition, including from Walter Hewlett who was against the merger. Walter Hewlett is currently an HP board member and son of one of the company's founders. The David and Lucile Packard Foundation also opposed the deal. The foundation presently owns a 10-percent stake in HP.

### Job cuts galore

If anything could best describe the year 2001, it was a year of job cuts. Big companies like Hewlett-Packard, Cisco, IBM, Compaq, Intel and Sun Microsystems have all announced massive downsizing efforts to save money. HP had to let go of 6,000 employees worldwide early this year, prior to the announcement of the merger with Compaq. Compaq also cut 5,000 jobs this year as the company failed to meet its numbers. Both companies are expecting to cut more jobs following the merger.

Giant chipmaker Intel also cut 6 percent of its workforce, or about 5,000 jobs this year, a move meant to cushion the impact of dipping PC sales.

Meanwhile, industry behemoth IBM said that it will cut more than 1,000 jobs in its consulting and services business. The company, however, claimed that this was less than one percent of the 150,000 jobs in their Global Services group.

Another victim of the PC industry downturn was Dell Computer. The maker of made-to-order PCs had to cut 3,000 to 4,000 jobs during the year. The cuts, which affected workers in the United States, were a result of dipping PC sales.

Server giant Sun Microsystems also adjusted its business in reaction to hard times. This year, it "redeployed" workers, and also enforced attrition, resulting in 300 job cuts by the end of the year.

### Job cuts at home

In the Philippines, Fujitsu Computer Products Corp. had to ask 1,500 employees to go into early retirement following a decision to cut 16,000 of its workforce globally. The local subsidiary was forced to lay off workers involved in the production of hard disk drives in its manufacturing plant in the country.

### Gadgets and gizmos

While the future of the high-tech world seems very bleak, Filipinos had been briefly distracted by the coming of various gadgets, gizmos and mobile phones, and the gaming consloes—like the X-Box— into the country.

It was this year that Microsoft's PocketPC gained popularity over the Palm following the release of newer devices from makers like Compaq, HP and Casio. The iPAQ has reportedly become a hit in the country as prices have gone down and more accessories were made available in the local market.

The year also saw the entry of the latest Palm-based devices that now sport colorful screens. PC sales have, indeed, been down but anecdotal evidence show that more and more Filipinos now buy digital devices that are priced significantly lower than PCs.

Meanwhile, the mobile phone frenzy in the Philippines continues. While mobile Internet seems far from the minds of Filipinos, local mobile phone companies had been coming out with entertaining and sometimes outrageous applications for today's mobile phones as the country's mobile phone users hit 10 million this year.

Considered as the most "sophisticated" users of text messaging in the world, mobile phone-wielding Filipinos have become more emotionally attached to the mobile communication device because local service providers have provided them options to make it more than a mobile phone.

Mobile phone companies now attach a list of value-added services to today's mobile phone. Short message service (SMS), unlike wireless application protocol (WAP) in the Philippines remains the most popular service because it provides an instant and affordable medium of communication.

### Consumers cry foul

Funny as this news may seem, but when mobile phone operators in the country announced cuts on "free" SMS allocated to GSM mobile phone subscribers late this year, several consumer groups cried foul.

With over 100 million SMS (also known as text messages) sent through the country's mobile networks every day, the mobile phone operators argued that the reduction of text messages was inevitable. Smart Communications Inc. said that they needed to do it because free SMS uses resources that are "finite," therefore, it should be offered at a premium price. Globe Telecoms, on the other hand, said that it was meant to reduce the SMS traffic that passes through their network.

Consumer groups like the Philippine League for Democratic Telecommunications Inc. took the mobile phone operators to court, but lost.

The year also saw the dispute between Philippine domain registry dotPH Inc. and consumer advocates. The dispute resulted in heated exchanges over several local mailing lists among dotPH officials and the Philippine Domain Authority Convenors (PhilDAC).

The dispute began when the latter insisted on reforms in the administration of the PH domain. PhilDAC accused dotPH chief Joel Disini, who is also the country code top-level domain administrator, of having a "monopoly" over the administration of the PH domain, and wanted redelegation or reassignment of the administration powers to an independent body.

PhilDAC also filed a number of consumer complaints against dotPH but was later dismissed. The group also opposed dotPH's plans to market .PH as an "optional" phone domain.

Late this year, Jim Ayson, owner-moderator of the PH-Cyberview mailing list, the list where all the fight started, engaged Disini in another word war, which is expected to extend until next year. Ayson, who also lodged a consumer complaint against dotPH, said that he is not about to let dotPH off the hook yet.

### Politics and IT

Further, the year 2001 saw two government agencies fall victim to politics and bloated egos. One involved former National Computer Center chief Ramon "Ike" Señeres who refused to step down despite the appointment of a new chief by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Unwanted by employees of the NCC, Señeres held on to his position, and even took his case to the courts. Eventually, he had to bow out.

The other agency swept by politics involved former Science and Technology Secretary Filemon Uriarte Jr. Uriarte, a member of the Catholic laygroup Couples for Christ, was accused of being involved in "questionable" deals and "mismanagement."

Uriarte, however, denied all accusations and asked a dialogue with his accusers. He also told then President Joseph Estrada, who appointed him to the position, that he planned to leave the agency. He was, however, asked to stay, and so he did. After People Power II, Uriarte decided not to accept his reappointment as science secretary.

**READ MORE ABOUT THIS STORY ONLINE**

**inQ7.net**

Read more of the biggest issues which happened in 2001 online at www.inq7.net. Next week, we will feature predictions for the IT industry for the year 2002, coming from the industry players themselves.

**ICT down but not out in the year 2001 (Part 1)**
http://www.inq7.net/inf/2001/dec/27/inf_1-1.htm

**ICT down but not out in the year 2001 (Part 2)**
http://www.inq7.net/inf/2001/dec/28/inf_1-1.htm

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# Philippines Online partners with e-business solutions firm Mtech.com

PHILIPPINES Online, one of the country's Internet service providers, has forged a partnership with Mtech.com Inc., an e-business solutions provider specializing in Internet solutions, software development, IT consulting and technical training.

Through the partnership, Mtech.com can integrate the Philippines Online version of StoreSense, a Java-based application that provides an e-commerce storefront solution for small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to its e-commerce services.

Philippines Online Storesense has a payment gateway module, developed specifically for its implementation in the Philippines, allowing the application to securely transact with existing local payment gateways such as Authoriz.Net and BPI payment services. Its straightforward interface, including built-in templates and wizards, allows even novice users to immediately build an online store and begin selling online. As their online business grows, merchants can seamlessly upgrade to such advanced functionality as supply chain, inventory and customer management.

"SMEs are now looking into e-commerce as a way to drive new revenue streams, develop new efficiencies and increase customer loyalty," says Jayson Yu, chief operating officer of Philippines Online. "We are glad that through this partnership, a sophisticated yet cost-effective e-commerce solution is made more accessible to the businesses which need it most. Local merchants can now create the type of sophisticated electronic store that provides a rich shopping experience for their customers."

Storesense is developed by US-based Kurant Corp., a provider of e-business and software and services, with Philippines Online as its master reseller in the Philippines. It is designed to help SMEs deploy full-featured sites capable of various e-commerce functionalities beginning with entry-level catalogue, shopping cart and real-time transaction processing and extending to high-end inventory management and sophisticated supply chain communication.

Mtech.com offers complete technical integration for local companies by building, maintaining and supporting the companies' infrastructure and integrating every aspect of their systems. Mtech.com seeks to help in building the kind of companies that will be in track with the fast-paced movement of the technological future.

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•98 MB100D P368T 9276597•

#### TOYOTA

90s Camry A/T USV P268 86 MR2 USV 7210317/4895

#### VAN/PICK-UP

Starex'99 green,low mileage, A/T P570T •7214341•7221326•

#### OTHER CAR BRANDS

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### HEAVY EQUIPMENT/ TRANSPORT

Executive Aircraft B55 Beechcraft Baron 6 Pass Fax 02-8509018 For Info

## TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

### CARS FOR RENT

L3•Cars• 9273453 4538295

BNEW VAN 8254058/8261045

Vans Coaster Bus 913-9123

CARS/VANS/BRIDAL 8955627

HiAce;L300;BrdalMB;Vans9296250

IT/HIACE 9136710/4333682

L300 T7411356

MB HiAce L3 Urvan 8257135

STAREX L300 CARS 7268388

Van A1-Con 12Str 433-2161

### WANTED TO BUY

BUYING USED CARS 8990215

### CAR LOAN

1.5% Fast Car Loan 3677523/24

2% w/o Taking Car 8966633

2% w/o taking car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 3646928

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 3732083

## GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

### ELECTRONIC & INDUSTRIAL EQUIP

Farmtrotor/Ford 3672002

### PETS

AMERICAN COCKER SPANIEL PUPS WITH PEDIGREE AND VET PAPERS BLACK OR BUFF COLOR 7 WEEKS OLD MALE P14K AND FEMALE P16K PHONE 8160148

### SPORTING GOODS

B.Table 30/33/36/38T A1 Qlty BNew 8020566 / 8014494

Imported Billiard 22T, 35T Complete Acc's. 8618714/16 8613123 / 8613125

New Billiard P18.5T P22T P25T Ok C.Card 781-9453

### WANTED TO BUY

B/SELL FUL PD EDUC PLAN 7137284•09177939632

**BUYING ROLEX**
others, High Price CASH CALL 09178142309/7269687

**ANY ROLEX**
Buy / Sell / Pawn / Repair Tel# 804-0484 • 834-2886

## GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

### WANTED TO BUY

Buy/Pawn Diamonds T834-2886

SALE EDUC'L PLAN 8061674

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### MALE

Wanted Immed. Male Nurse Prvt. Care • Call 668-8075

### FEMALE

Attractive GROs Staty-In Call Kaye @ 747-3513

Liveout Househelper Age 18-25 Las Pinas call Zeny 8736731 Leave MSG

### MALE/FEMALE

COLLECTION STAFF W/EXP MALE 25-35 YRS OLD ASST. LOAN STAFF FEMALE 25-30 YRS OLD W/BASIC ACCTING & COMPUTER SKILLS BRING RESUME TO NIPPON CREDIT 901 OMM BLDG SN MIGUEL AVE ORTIGAS OR CALL 9100737 MR. GARCIA

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### AUCTION SALE

Stargem Pawnshop 26-A E. Rodriquez Sr. Ave. Q.C. We sell all expired pledges on Feb. 1, 2002 at 9a.m. J. Enriquez - Lic. Auctioneer

Unigem Pawnshop 3-E N. Ramirez St. Q.C. We Sell all expired pledges on Feb. 1, 2002 at 9 a.m. J. Enriquez Lic. Auctioneer

### BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

**65 GRADS**
DIFF. POSITIONS
8-17T/Month
•Call 5266124•

Bo. Kapitolyo 125$m^2$ Office or Shop Call 634-1212

EARN FR HOME 8531008/09178311728

**School For Sale**
Preschool•Elem•High School Calabarzon Area (can branch out in all areas of the Phils.) P19M only DBO 0919-8016126

### LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that the estate of the late spouses **SOLEDAD GERONIMO LERMA** and **LUIS L. LERMA** of Morong Rizal who died on August 24, 2001 and October 23, 1999, respectively have been extrajudicially settled by heirs per Doc. #240, Page #48, Book #CXXXIII, Series of 2001 of Atty. Gregorio E. Ariola, Jr. (P.D.I.-- December- 17, 24, and 31 2001.)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Ismael B. Pan who died on March 13, 2000, consisting of personal property was extrajudicially settled & distributed among his heirs by means of an Extrajudicial Settlement of Estate w/Waiver of Share executed on October 23, 2000 & ratified before Atty. Buenaventura R. Puentebella, Notary Public for and in Caloocan City, as per Doc. #316, Page #65, Book #XXIV, Series of 2000 of his Notarial Register. (PDI-Dec. 14, 21 & 28, 2001)

### PERSONAL

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT Holy Spirit, Thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. Thou who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires maybe. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your Perpetual Glory. Amen.- OSWALDO IV

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### PERSONAL

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT Holy Spirit, Thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. Thou who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires maybe. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your Perpetual Glory. Amen.
Pray for 3 consecutive days without stating one's wish. After the 3rd day your wish will be granted no matter how difficult it may be. Promise to publish this as soon as your favor has been granted. - Helen G.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

Today, Megamall Branch and Main Office will be opened to serve your advertising needs:

**Megamall Branch**
5th Level Building B
9 AM-7PM

**Main Office**
Pasong Tamo, Makati
10 AM-2 PM

Tomorrow, NEW YEAR'S DAY all branches will be closed.

---

**We accept Classified advertisements**
Lines, Recruitment, Obituaries, Bidding

in **Luzon**

*Bakit lalayo ka pa? Sa* INQUIRER, *convenient na sulit pa!*

[illegible]

NATIONAL CLASSIFIEDS
The Widest Reaching Classifieds

The PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER enjoys the biggest circulation and readership among all the major broadsheets in the country. It has a dominant market share of over 55% according to the 2000 Asia Research Organization (ARO) Tri-Media Study.

---

**We accept Classified advertisements**
Lines, Recruitment, Obituaries, Bidding

in **Visayas**

*Diri na ta sa* INQUIRER *bay! Sayon na sulit pa!*

Bacolod City
Ms. Elizabeth Verdeflor
Bubbles N' Swirls
Terra Building, La Salle Avenue
Bacolod City
Telefax No. (034) 433-3828
Cell. No. (0917) 965-2691
Cebu
Cebu Daily News
15-15 Escario Street, Cebu City
Tel. No. (032) 232-7618
Dumaguete City
Mr. Raymund Mercado
Hi-Top News Magazine & General Merchandise
Dr. V. Locsin Street, Dumaguete City
Tel. Nos. (035) 225-5795/225-4354
Mr. Ramon Charles Sy
New Renie's
Dr. V. Locsin Street, Dumaguete City
Tel. Nos. (035) 225-4320/422-7452
Fax No. (035) 255-1182
Iloilo
Mr. Eduardo Ty
c/o Ms. Marilou Ty
Eddie-Mar News & Magazine Center
Ground Floor, Bombo Radio Building
Mapa Street, Iloilo City
Tel. No. (033) 337-3120/337-5018
Mr. Jim Pelicano
309 Ledesma Street, Iloilo City
Tel. No. (033) 508-2530
Cell. No. (0917) 401-9160

Kalibo
Dra. Besse Candelario
Candelario Enterprise
RB Newspapers, Magazine & Song Hits Distribution Agency
Pastrana Street, Kalibo, Aklan
Tel. Nos. (036) 262-4155/268-5200
Roxas City
Ms. Marieta Santos
M. Santos Komiks Magazines & Newspaper Dealer
Door C, MB Building
Fuentes Drive, Roxas City
Tel. Nos. (036) 621-5556/622-6928
Tacloban City
Mr. Neil Montejo
Montejo's Newspaper Supply
245 Avenida Veteranos
Tacloban City
Tel. Nos. (053)325-6743/321-2954
Tagbilaran City
Mr. Ferdinand Mercado
Doña Rosario Village
G. Penaflor Street
Tagbilaran City
Tel. No. (038) 411-5007

NATIONAL CLASSIFIEDS
The Widest Reaching Classifieds

The PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER enjoys the biggest circulation and readership among all the major broadsheets in the country. It has a dominant market share of over 55% according to the 2000 Asia Research Organization (ARO) Tri-Media Study.

---

**We accept Classified advertisements**
Lines, Recruitment, Obituaries, Bidding

in **Mindanao**

*Ake ya tu na* INQUIRER. *Sirea ya, sulit pa!*

Butuan City
Mr. Rolando Busa
R.C. Busa Trading
490 G. Flores Avenue
Butuan City
Tel. Nos. (085)225-3247
(085) 225-3169/341-5062
Cagayan de Oro City
OMNI General Merchandise
Dr. 1 De Leon Building
Pabayo-Pacana Streets
Cagayan de Oro City
Tel. Nos. (08822) 722-830
(088) 856-5283
Grandstar News & Magazines
122 Cruz Taal corner Pabayo Street
Cagayan de Oro City
Tel. Nos. (088) 857-2571/857-1612
Telefax No. (088) 231-3248
E-mail grandstar@hotmail.com
Cotabato
Marquez News & Magazine Agency
Marquez Building, 51 Sinsuat Avenue
Cotabato City
Tel. Nos. (064) 421-3264/421-6811/ (064) 220-7089 (Lolit - Secretary)
Davao City
Dabaw Periodicals, Inc.
Santos Building, Gov. Duterte Street
Davao City (fronting Galleria Hotel)
Tel. Nos. (082) 226-4406/221-3379/ 221-3424/226-2931

Babasahin ATBP.
Lower Level, Gaisano Mall
Bajada, Davao City
Ground Floor, Victoria Plaza
Bajada, Davao City
Tel. Nos. (082) 221-3927/227-4410/300-2920
General Santos
Mr. Ramon Dimalanta
GSC Newscenter, Dimalanta Building
35 Pioneer Avenue, General Santos City
Tel. Nos. (083) 301-8731/301-6244
Pagadian City
Mr. Eduardo Villar Clavero
Edmar News - Advertising Agency
Bonifacio Street, Pagadian City
Tel. Nos. (062) 215-1448/214-2641
Cell. No. (0918) 660-0001
Zamboanga
Mr. James Hao
Marian's Variety Store
80-88 Sevilla Street, Zamboanga City
Tel. Nos. (062) 991-4294/991-0973
Mr. Ruben Bautista
c/o Norie Bautista
Christian Vincent Newsstand
P. Briantes Street corner Campaner Street
Zamboanga City
Tel. Nos. (062) 991-2965/990-4016

NATIONAL CLASSIFIEDS
The Widest Reaching Classifieds

The PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER enjoys the biggest circulation and readership among all the major broadsheets in the country. It has a dominant market share of over 55% according to the 2000 Asia Research Organization (ARO) Tri-Media Study.

**CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING DIVISION**
Main Office: PASONG TAMO, MAKATI CITY
☎ 8972535 (Direct) ☎ 8978808 (Trunk) Fax 8974808
G/F ATRIUM BLDG., MAKATI AVENUE, MAKATI CITY
☎ 8114361 ☎ 8114370 ☎ 8114012 Fax 8925578
ST. ANTHONY'S BLDG., AURORA BLVD., QUEZON CITY
☎ 912-9008-11 Fax 912-9011
SM MEGAMALL, MANDALUYONG CITY
☎ 6350219 ☎ 6372008 Fax 6350220
G/F TRINITY BLDG., 636 T.M. KALAW ST., ERMITA, MANILA
☎ 5273342 ☎ 5280183 ☎ 5276357 Fax 5280213
ALABANG, MUNTINLUPA CITY
☎ 8424503 ☎ 8506465 Fax 8506465
e-mail address: main_classifieds@inquirer.com.ph

# OBITUARIES

**RATE**
₱230 per column centimeter
(All prices exclusive of E-VAT)

**DEADLINE**
for reservations / cancellations / corrections
**Monday to Sunday**
12:00 noon
Day before publication

## MANUEL "BABY" D. ASENSIO, JR.

Peacefully joined his Creator and his beloved Mama Mary
on December 28, 2001 at the age of 70.

His loving wife **Fides Cuyugan**; children **Dennis** and **Rebekah**, **Esther**, **Manuel III** and **Marissa "Iwi"**; siblings **Nena** (†) and **Ed Montinola** (†), **Lulu** and **Joe Alfonso**, **Gus** (†) and **Baby Asensio**, **Marite** and **Ernesto Hofileña** and his grandchildren **Isobel Nicole Laurel Asensio, Michael Andrew, Ryan Cristopher, Kirsten Marie** and **Marielle Denise Colby Asensio** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at his residence at **1 Meralco Line, Narra Street, Monte Vista Subdivision, Barangka, Marikina City** (Tels. 647-4608 or 933-6797).

Mass and Cremation will be held at 8:00 a.m. at Loyola Memorial Park Crematorium, Marikina City on Thursday, January 3, 2002.

After the cremation services on January 3 his ashes will be brought to Iloilo City and interred in the family plot in the Jaro Cemetery on Saturday, January 5, 2002 at 9:00 a.m.

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**Our Dearly Beloved**

## Atty. Ignacio Velasco Aprecio

Of Binangonan and Pasig City

Retired Treasurer, Pasig City

*Peacefully joined our Lord on December 29, 2001 at the age of 97.*

February 1, 1904 - December 29, 2001

His bereaved children **Consuelo & Robert Yee, Zeny A. Perez**; sister **Avelina Arambulo**; brother **Remigio Aprecio**; his grandchildren **Carolyn & Joey Zafra, Bobby S. Yee, Bernie & Ronnie Perez & Kristi Pozon**; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Arlington East, The Golden Chapels, 1354 C. Raymundo corner Mercedes Avenue, San Miguel, Pasig City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, January 2, 2002 at the Pasig Catholic Cemetery after the Mass at the Immaculate Conception Parish Church, Pasig City.

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*"What You give, You do not take away...*
*And death is only a horizon*
*And a horizon is nothing*
*save the limit of our sight"*

*In Loving Memory of*

## MA. LUISA ALBERT ATIENZA

*December 13, 1946 — January 1, 1996*

**On her Sixth Death Anniversary**

Her husband **Jacky** and children **Marti** and **Charly** request relatives and friends to remember her in their prayers and to join them at the celebration of the Holy Mass at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Chapel, Camp Gen. Rigoberto J. Atienza, Libis, Quezon City at 11:00 AM on Tuesday, January 1, 2002.

The Holy Mass will also be offered at the following churches:

| | |
|---|---|
| Abbey of Our Lady of Montserrat | 7:00 AM |
| Assumption Convent | 8:00 AM |
| Santa Maria della Strada Church | 12:00 NN |
| Our Lady of Mount Carmel Chapel | 5:00 PM |
| Christ the King Parish | 6:00 PM |
| Santuario de San Jose | 6:15 PM |
| Sacred Heart Parish Church | 6:30 PM |
| St. John Bosco Parish | 7:00 PM |
| Mary the Queen Parish | 7:15 PM |

---

*An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.*

*Always caring...* **INQUIRER OBITUARIES**

**OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:**
❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

**WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS**
**and bank-to-bank payments**

**DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT**
**MESSAGE OF THANKS**
**DEATH ANNIVERSARY**
**REQUIEMS**
**FREE OBIT DESIGN**

---

**The Missionary Sisters**
**Servants of the Holy Spirit**

Announce the death of

## SISTER LUCY AGNES, S.SP.S. (EMILIA SINGSON)

*on December 30, 2001 at the age of 73*
*at the Convent of the Holy Spirit, Baguio City.*

Mass of the Resurrection will be offered on Wednesday, January 2, 2002 at 9:00 AM at the Convent of the Holy Spirit, #8 Poinsettia Road, Quezon City.

Interment will follow at the Christ the King Cemetery, E. Rodriguez Avenue, Quezon City.

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*Message of Thanks*

We,
the family of the late

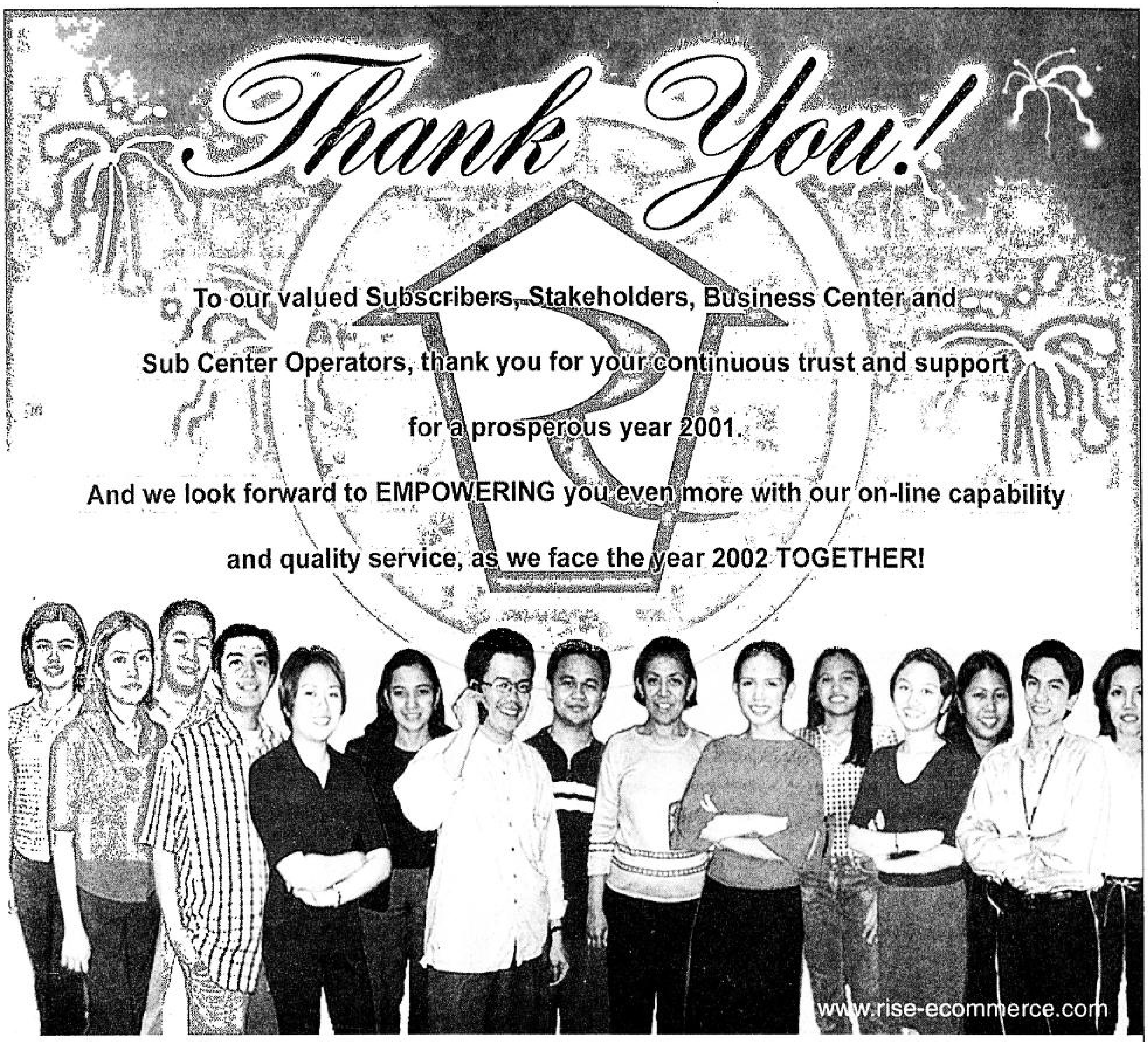
## JOSEFA HEMBRADOR MONZON

wish to thank all of you who,
by way of your presence, prayers, thoughts and
flowers, offered us solace and comfort.

***God bless you!***

---

**"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."** John 3:16



# Thank You!

To our valued Subscribers, Stakeholders, Business Center and Sub Center Operators, thank you for your continuous trust and support for a prosperous year 2001.

And we look forward to EMPOWERING you even more with our on-line capability and quality service, as we face the year 2002 TOGETHER!

www.rise-ecommerce.com

## BUSINESS CENTER OPERATIONS

**METRO MANILA BUSINESS CENTER**

**RISE PACO**
Mr Allan T. Resterio
1155 JL Escoda Street,
Paco Market, Paco, Manila
Tel Nos. (02) 562-0645/(02) 524-9549
Telefax: (02) 498-0009
Mobile: (0917) 498-7682/(0919) 801-2633

**RISE CHIT PANDACAN**
Ms Necita Salivio
1944 A. Sampaguita Street,
Pandacan, Manila
Tel. Nos. (02) 561-6605/(02) 561-8980

**RISE ROOSEVELT QC**
Ms Meryle R. Taaca
Unit 7, 3F 316 Roosevelt Ave.,
SFDM, QC.
Tel. No: (02) 330-9259 Telefax: (02) 372-9081
Mobile: (0917) 540-1634
E-mail: mtaaca@yahoo.com

**RISE AD MANDALUYONG**
Ms Archely Ruiz
Unit 1121 Cityland Shaw Tower, Shaw Blvd.
cor. St. Francis St., Mandaluyong City
Tel. No. (02) 687-1190 Telefax: (02) 687-2003
Mobile: (0919) 3627285/(0919) 8672798

**RISE PROJECT 8 QC**
106 3. Road 20, Project 8, Quezon City
Tel. Nos: (02) 454-0619/(02) 454-0600
Telefax: Home (02) 927-2314
Office (02) 425-1443 Mobile: (0917) 8118079
E-mail: rreds@pacific.net.ph

**RISE PASAY ROAD MAKATI**
Mr Anthony Arciaga
5554 P. Binay St. cor. Valderama St.,
Brgy. Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Telefax: (02) 887-2446
Mobile: (0917) 488-0545

**RISE WINNER MAKATI EDSA**
Ms Amber Tolosa
1695 Evangelista cor. Lacuna Sts., Bangkal,
Makati City
Telefax: (02) 843-6541/42 loc 132
Mobile: (0917) 405-3437

**RISE D2 MAKATI**
Ms Luisa Lopez
5756 Fortuno Bldg., Kalayaan Ave.,
Brgy. Pinagkaisahan, Makati City
Tel. No. 881-6780 Telefax: 882-3936
Mobile: (0917) 2021758

**RISE CYBIZ QC**
Ms Lourdes Agbayani
18 Antonio Luna St., Project 4,
Quezon City
Tel. No. 437-0870 Telefax: (02) 913-8564
Mobile: (0917) 3871028/(0919) 8328771
E-mail: risecybiz@edsamail.com.ph

**RISE E-CUBAO**
Ms Nila Cañezal
Room 403 Diamond Bldg., 603 EDSA,
Cubao, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. (02) 410-2916 (02) 721-3386
Telefax: Mobile: (0917) 4948023

**RISE CYBER CENTRAL DILIMAN QC**
Ms Junjie Olvina
Telefax: (02) 931-8003
Mobile: (0917) 8374464

**RISE COMMONWEALTH GROUP**
Ms Ofelia J. Ballesta 628 Grapes St.,
Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City
Tel No. (02) 428-0840
Telefax: (02) 932-2490

**RISE MYMAR**
Ms Rosalinda Jugo 17 General Isidro
Torres St., Galler Heights Subd., Baniat,
Quezon City
Telefax: (02) 939-4246
Mobile: (0919) 8260702

**RISE E-COMMERCE MARIKINA**
Ms Erlinda C.Semadilla Room 302,
Azarcon Bldg., #51 Bayanbayanan Avenue,
Marikina Heights, Marikina City
Telefax: (02) 934-7764
Mobile: (0919) 3949151

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#43 Col. Cuasay St., (fronting 8th St.) Don
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Tel. Nos. (02) 838-9273/(02) 838-7883
Mobile: (0919) 8990289

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Ms Emma C. Daniel
2/F Our Lady of Mercy Bldg., Quirino
Highway corner Ramirez St., Novaliches
Proper, Quezon City
Tel No. (02) 935-8381
Telefax: (02) 417-8332
Mobile :(0919) 872-3689

**RISE E-CONSUMERS CENTER CAINTA**
Ms Emma Licuanan
VV Soliven corner Felix Avenue, (Infront of
Soundstage), Cainta, Rizal
Tel. Nos. (02) 249-0284/(02) 681-8069 /
(02) 645-4210 Telefax: (02) 645-8244
Mobile: (0917) 8369937/(0919) 4776239

**RISE E-POWER**
Suite 210 & 212, Mindanao Nova Realty
Bldg., (near Quirino Hi-Way) Mindanao
Avenue, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. (02) 935-6328
Telefax: (02) 935-9074
Mobile: (0917) 3629673/(0919) 8573230/
(0919) 3889039

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Telefax: (02) 800-6872 Mobile: (0919) 2933191
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**RISE BLU NAVOTAS**
Mr Bernie Uy
819 L.S. Cifra Bldg., M. Naval, Navotas,
Metro Manila
Tel. No: (02) 2830358/2827915/2830358
5244266 Telefax: (02)2828338
Mobile:(0919)3762088

**RISE PARAÑAQUE CITY**
Ms Marilou Espiritu
84-C Dona Soledad Avenue, Better Living,
Parañaque City
Tel. Nos. (02) 821-1168 / (02) 821-4764
Telefax: (02) 821-1155 Mobile: (0919) 4482698
E-mail: lhouespiritu@yahoo.com

**RISE TRISOME VALENZUELA**
Ms Mildred B. Datuin
Unit 1 Keppelson Bldg. #51 McArthur Highway,
Marulas, Valenzuela City
Tel. No. (02) 227-2163 Telefax: (02) 277-2164
Mobile: (0917) 5280043
E-mail: trisome@edsamail.com.ph

**RISE PINOY SAMPALOC**
Ms Estela "Bing" Diaz-Rafanan
1001 G. Tolention corner E. delos Reyes,
Sampaloc, Manila
Telefax: (02) 736-3070
Mobile: (0917) 4608034/(0919) 471-3949
E-mail: risepinoy@yahoo.com

**RISE BUSINESS CENTER PASAY**
Ms Sincerely Morena/ Ms Angelita Valencia
GF. Villaruel Tower, 245 Villaruel St.,
Pasay City
Tel. Nos. (02) 510-4211 to 19 local 1004
Mobile: (0919) 5958294/(0919) 8681613/
(0917) 8313631

**RISE TAYTAY RIZAL**
Ms Teresita Mallaca
Kaytikling Road, Ortigas Avenue Extension,
Taytay, Rizal
Tel. No. (02) 660-8381/(02) 6608362
Telefax: (02) 284-2416

**LUZON BUSINESS CENTER**

**RISE EXCEL PANGASINAN**
Mr Manuel G. Valdez 2/F, Tandingan Bldg.,
Nancayasan Urdaneta City, Pangasinan
Telefax: (075) 568-7410
Mobile: (0917) 4473280

**RISE E-COMMERCE DAGUPAN**
Mr Generoso Bornollia 130 Guiling St.,
Dagupan City
Tel. Nos (075) 515-3347 Telefax: (075)5153496
Mobile: (0919) 6649784/(0917) 3654775

**RISE SF LA UNION**
Mr Socrates Resty Rellama National Hi-Way, Brgy.
Pagdaraoan SL, San Fernando, La Union
Telefax: (072) 700-1935 Mobile: (0919) 863-2682

**RISE DINS E-COMMERCE BAGUIO CITY**
Mr Ferdinand G. Tangalin/Ms Bella Navalta Rm 204
National Life Bldg., 110 Session Road, Baguio City
Telefax: (074) 447-0795
Mobile: (0919) 218-2997 (0919) 670-9848

**RISE MALOLOS BULACAN**
June Zafra Paseo del Congreso Ave.,
Malolos, Bulacan
Tel. No. (044) 791-7641

**RISE BIÑAN LAGUNA**
Ms Lilibeth Gabriel
Unit 305 University Center, National
Hi-Way, Biñan, Laguna T
el. Nos. (049) 839-0878 (049) 411-0389
Telefax: (049) 8391136
Mobile: (0919) 8195899/(0919) 5766235

**RISE VIRMAL BATANGAS**
Mr Virgilio.Lichauco Lyceum Cite, Kumintang Ibaba,
Batangas City
Tel. Nos. (043) 300-2001 Telefax: (043) 300-5815

**RISE PALAWAN, INC.**
Mr Nixon Edora
San Juan Bldg., National Hi-Way, San Pedro,
Puerto Prinsesa City
Tel. Nos. (048) 433-5254
Telefax: (048) 434-3660 Mobile: (0919) 2350083

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**RISE KALIBO AKLAN**
Ms Delia Legaspi/Ms Roselita Sauza
1503 G. Pastrana St., Kalibo, Aklan
Tel. No. (036) 262-3562 Telefax: (036) 2627228
Mobile: (0917) 6445180 (0917) 6441050

**RISE NYALA BACOLOD**
Ms Maria Suzita Diaz-Ea
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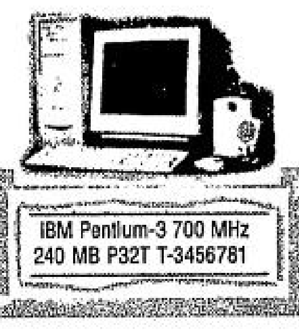

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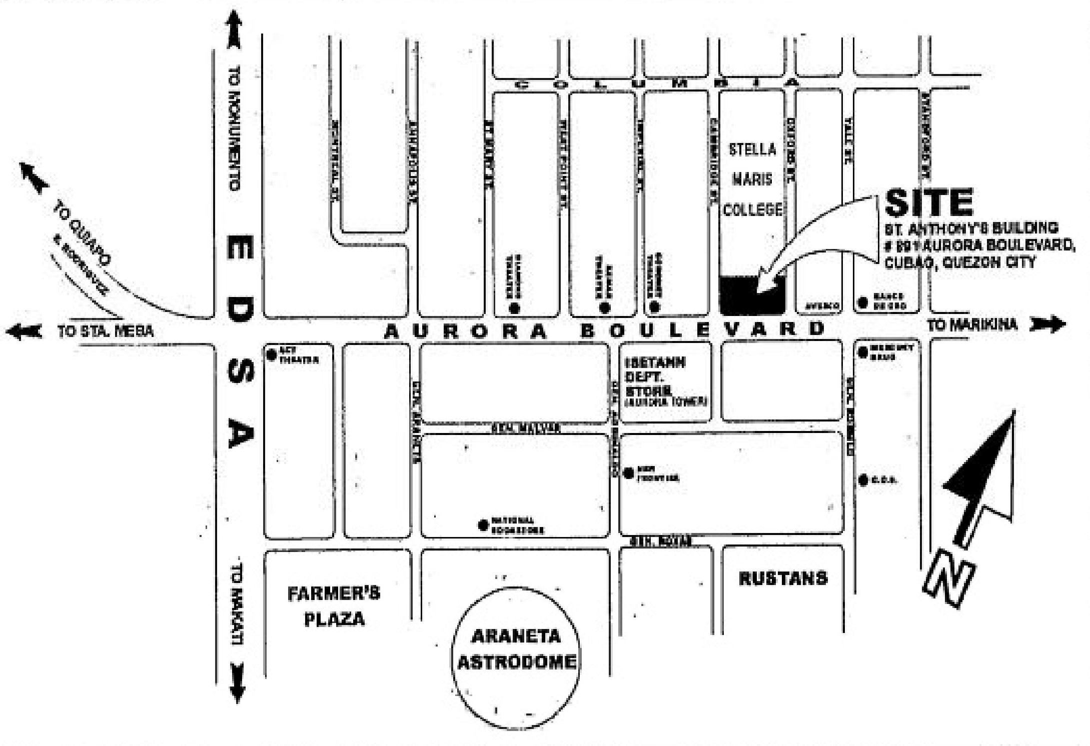


# BUSINESS*Monday*

MARGIE QUIMPO-ESPINO, Business Features Editor

## *Exec says it's people first, product second*

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

**MANAGEMENT STYLES**

MANAGEMENT, according to Ferdinand M. Corpuz, country manager of Lifestyles Asia Pacific Philippines Inc., boils down to the ability to handle people, to make them motivated and trained enough to bring in the results you want at the end of the year.

There are different approaches to getting people to work, but Corpuz found out after more than 12 years in the sales and marketing business that it pays to develop genuine relationships with people.

"I believe that building relationships is paramount to the success of a business. The product or service is secondary," Corpuz says.

People skills play an even bigger role in companies that rely on the sales of agents or business partners who are not directly employed by the company.

Lifestyles for instance, a Canada-based multinational company engaged in multi-level marketing and direct sales of food supplements, has only 35 employees but about 40,000 independent distributors.

"The challenge is how to manage these independent agents and I meet the challenge by delegating much of the workload to the sales people. I also go out of my way to meet the top agents and just to let them know that we are behind them," he says.

The support that Corpuz and his staff gave to Lifestyles Philippines enabled the Philippine operations to become the top performing country, besting 17 other countries where Lifestyles operates.

This is one of the reasons behind the decision of the Lifestyles group to hold its international convention in the Philippines scheduled for February next year. Over 4,000 delegates from 18 countries are expected to attend.

Management of a company, Corpuz explains, exists to support the distributors or agents, solve problems and to set the direction and targets for the whole organization.

Corpuz says it took some time before he could get into the groove of dealing with people on a daily basis, since he started out as a corporate lawyer.

He was admitted to the Philippine Bar in 1980 and worked for different companies for 15 years. He specialized in corporate and labor law, working for companies like the Insular Bank of Asia and America, Philippine Commercial International Bank and finally in Avon Cosmetics Inc.

He worked as Avon's corporate counsel but it did not take long before he was lured to the sales side of the business.

"I went around the branches as part of my job as corporate counsel and I dealt with people and listened to their concerns. I soon realized that I really liked dealing with people and in helping them," Corpuz says.

Corpuz then asked if he could go into sales and his career in direct selling immediately took off. At one time, he was branch manager of Avon's Taft, Cagayan de Oro, Lucena and Davao branches.

From Avon, Corpuz moved on to become general manager of Herbalife International Philippines Inc. where he stayed for a little over two years. He again moved to Symmetry Philippines before assuming his post as country manager of Lifestyles in July this year.

"Being in sales gives me a different feeling because I can immediately see the results of helping people make a living. It is different in law because it sometimes takes years before a case is resolved," Corpuz says.

He adds that he had to consciously change his approach to dealing with people as it is quite different to come in as a lawyer compared to being a sales manager.

"After a while I managed to blend in but it took some time for me to adjust. It was made easier by the fact that I genuinely like being with people," Corpuz says.

## What are the bright spots in the dim RP economy?

By Dennis M. Arroyo

TERROR from the Abu Sayyaf. Investments fly away. The stock market tanks. The hi-tech bubble bursts abroad. Our electronic exports are derailed. Then Sept. 11 and the global slump. The economic images of 2001 are not pretty.

And yet the economy's night is not totally black. Here are the stars in the darkness.

### Better than the West

When a storm rages at sea, it's vital to make sure that your boat is sturdy. When the global economy is in turmoil, make sure that your economy's fundamentals are sound.

How sturdy then are the fundamentals of the Philippine economy?

While many other countries are in recession, we still managed to grow. It seems that the growth rates for gross domestic product (GDP) will hit 3.3 percent for 2001. That's much better than the negative rates around Asia and the West.

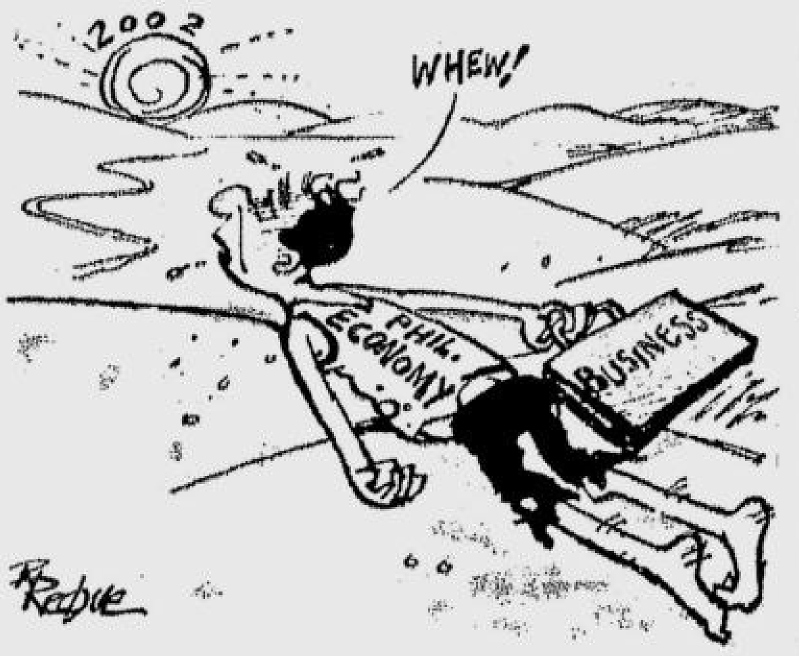
The United States is in recession. And Japan's performance is so bad that her output is at a 13-year low. In Asia, it appears only Vietnam, China and India will beat the Philippines in growth rates.

The nation achieved this growth despite the slump in global demand for electronics, our main export. The rate is also above the projections of the International Monetary Fund and the Asian Development Bank.

### Controlled purse

During the term of President Joseph Estrada, the budget deficit ballooned to almost P 225 billion. At that time borrowings had tripled, public spending bloated and corruption sapped investor confidence.

This year, the budget deficit is still below President Macapagal-Arroyo's P145-billion target. It is P144.63 billion for January to November, and it is likely that the state will enjoy a P6.92-billion surplus in December.



Government revenues are above target. For the first 11 months of 2001, revenues hit P508.90 billion, a sum greater than the target of P504.31 billion.

The Philippines reached the P100-billion target for foreign direct investments back in November.

### Saved by agriculture

Interest rates are low, now under 9 percent for the benchmark 91-day treasury bills.

Prices are under control. The inflation rate of 6.1 percent is within target. It was 5.5 percent in November.

Agriculture is doing well, thanks in part to healthy rain levels.

Rice output is seen to increase by 9 percent this fourth quarter, pushed up by the harvests of November.

### Enough of terror

The Abu Sayyaf did terrible damage to national security, investments, tourism and foreign exchange reserves. But the days of the bandit group are numbered.

Soon after the Sept. 11 attack on America, the Philippines expressed its strong support for the United States. This has opened the door for more military and economic aid.

American equipment and advisers are arriving, giving special training for Filipino troops.

"In the coming weeks, we'll be seeing the AFP receiving special training and assistance from our US counterparts," said Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan.

The AFP is in the process of acquiring night vision goggles. It has recently obtained eight helicopters, a C-130 cargo plane, trucks and firearms.

The Abu Sayyaf can run, but they can no longer hide.

### Malampaya bonanza

Then there is the bonanza of Malampaya. The gas field will make the Philippines more self-sufficient in energy, shore up foreign exchange reserves, bring in investments and may pull down the cost of electricity.

The offshore field near Palawan contains 2.7 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 85 million barrels of "condensate." That's enough to power 25 percent of the country's energy needs. It will cut $700 million in oil imports every year.

On the planning board is the construction of a 100-kilometer pipeline over the "Batman" route: Batangas to Manila. A group led by Shell is ready to invest $80 million in the enterprise.

The gas facility, an investment of $4.5 billion, was inaugurated last Oct. 16. It will provide $13 billion in royalties during the next two decades. This is the largest ever foreign investment in the country.

### Funds for farmers

The fight for social justice enjoyed a legal victory last Dec. 14.

The Supreme Court declared as public funds the coco levy money used to buy United Coconut Planters Bank (UCPB).

The government is now poised to take over the bank, reclaiming "what is rightfully owned by the small coco farmers," according to Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo.

During the dark regime of President Ferdinand Marcos, the state collected special levies from the coconut farmers, under Presidential Decree No. 276.

The money was used by Marcos friend Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. to buy the First United Bank, the forerunner of UCPB.

The Supreme Court upheld the administration's position that the money was exacted from the coconut farmers. Hence the funds must be used only for their benefit.

"We will see to it that the small coconut farmers and not the big coconut plantation landlords would benefit from the coco levies in the end," said Marcelo. "I will personally guarantee that."

*(Comments to dmarroyo@hotmail.com)*

## To produce goods productively, plan and control effectively

By Arturo O. Mangabat
*UP Institute for Small-Scale Industries*

**GOING INTO BUSINESS**

BEING a small entrepreneur, chances are you are your own production manager. This means you have to put together and supervise all manufacturing activities to the best of your ability.

Remember, however, that having technical skills alone are not enough, although these are a definite advantage. There are concepts, principles, and techniques in production management, which can help you "produce productively."

Productivity is the relationship between the goods produced and the inputs used in producing them, such as materials, labor, and fuel. Higher productivity then means a worker can make more from the same set of inputs than before.

Let's say that your welders used to finish three iron window grills in an hour. If they can now weld four grills an hour, their productivity has increased.

The following is a primer on production management principles, techniques and systems:

### Plan and control production

You must plan your production to prevent unnecessary delays, wastage, and excessive costs arising from lack of planning. Make sure that all necessary inputs for production are available and ready when you need them so that you can deliver your products when you promised to.

Watch out for the following situations that could lead to unnecessary delay:

1. Stocks of raw materials run out just when you need them.

2. Operation is interrupted because the next machine or worker does not have a continuous supply of in-process material from the preceding one.

3. Work stops because a machine breaks down.

When you plan, you can anticipate the problems that are likely to occur so that you can work out solutions or control measures to prevent these problems from occurring. Even if they do happen, planning would reduce its harmful effects.

The following guidelines should help:

1. Plan the delivery and supply level of materials and purchased parts so that you never run out of stock.

2. Plan the jobs to be done so that as soon as a worker has finished one job, there is another ready for him to do.

3. Plan your machine maintenance so that machines stop only when you want to and don't break down during production.

Make it a habit to devote some time to planning. It is not too difficult and it will save you a lot of time on the shop floor.

### Produce quality products

Always aspire for quality. When you turn out defective products, you waste material, labor, power and other inputs. This translates to added costs. You also lose the opportunity to make profit from the sale of good quality products.

Worse, you may even lose customers who may be disappointed with what they have bought from you. A defective or poor quality product may be caused by a number of factors. It could be due to inferior raw materials.

"Garbage in, garbage out" is very true in production. You must therefore always check that materials conform with your specifications. When materials are delivered by your supplier, always inspect to see if they match your quality requirements.

Poor craftsmanship arising from lack of skill or motivation of your workers can also contribute to poor-quality production. If your workers are neither trained nor motivated to produce for quality, you cannot expect them to produce high-quality work.

There are a number of things you can do to promote quality consciousness among your workers.

1. Give them complete, easy to understand, and clear instructions on the operations. These may be posted in the work areas or even on the machines themselves.

2. Make sure that workers know how to perform the operations well.

3. Provide them with clear drawings or diagrams.

4. Communicate clearly any change in procedures through simple directives.

5. Provide incentives to encourage workers to produce good quality products, e.g. monetary rewards for zero rejection. Conversely, hold them liable for every defective product they are responsible for.

6. Emphasize the importance of waste prevention—that it will benefit not only the owners and managers but all people who work for the company.

Defective products can also be the outcome of lack of control measures. Here are guidelines to follow in production control.

1. Make it a point to have inspection points or simple routine checks on important operations or activities.

2. Verify by means of adequate tests and criteria whether the finished product meets the quality standards or not.

3. Use information feedback from the final inspection to maintain production process.

4. Use simple sampling plans.

5. Maintain your equipment properly. Be sure they are in good condition. This also applies to your measuring and testing devices, which you must calibrate and maintain periodically.

Happy workers tend to be good workers. Be sure you have a well-motivated team cheerfully working for you.

### Analyze your product's value

You can also improve production by analyzing your product. Relate its primary function with the design, materials and other inputs used in making it to conform with its intended function or purpose.

The objective is to determine how you can produce the product at the lowest possible cost without reducing or affecting its capability to do what it is intended for. When you do this, you are doing "value analysis."

To illustrate: Let us say you are manufacturing ladies' stockings. What is their primary function? They are intended to cover the legs of the wearer to protect them and make them look smoother and more attractive.

Many years ago, stockings were designed with a wide strap for holding them up. The cost of this function of holding up the stockings included the cost of the fabric as well as the metal straps that went with them.

It was estimated that this function alone comprised about 50 percent of the total product cost. With value analysis, it was reckoned that if this strap were replaced with a cheaper but equally effective elastic, production would be cheaper.

Develop a questioning attitude with respect to the value and function of all the inputs used in manufacturing. Always relate these functions to the specific needs or wants of your target buyers.

The most common technique in value analysis is to look for alternative or substitute materials, say a cheaper but equally durable plastic instead of wood or glass.

*(From "You, Too, Can Start Your Own Business," published by the UP ISSI and Serdef. You can also check out the weekend training program on "Start Your Own Business" to be run in February 2001. Inquire from Mila Labrador, program manager, 926-6316; 928-7076)*

## Review of 2001 and resolutions for 2002

**MAPPING THE FUTURE**

*Augusto L. de Leon*

THE TIME has come to review the year that has been and to renew or resolve to do better in the year to be. What were the most important events in 2001 that have affected the lives of many in the country?

No doubt for many, not only in the Philippines but all over the world, Sept. 11 stands out as the single day that has made us rethink our lives. It has shaken the feeling of security of those in the United States—it had ripple effects on the economy of developed and developing countries.

From this event and the other events of the year what are the resolutions we have for the year to come.

### Keep going

To continue to do business, to plod on in spite of the many hurdles one has to face at this time of uncertainty, is indeed a challenge. In my article in the recently published book by the UP Institute of Small Scale Industries "Bridging the Gap—Philippine SMEs and Globalization," I have emphasized the need for small and medium business "to think globally, understand their industries from a global, national and industry perspective, and yet act locally to adjust to some economic realities of the business environment."

### Look for suitable niches

The present situation offers windows of opportunity for the small and medium industries. Remember, a smaller company with lower cost is able to address the needs for smaller production runs and meet specifications of small sized markets faster than larger companies can.

### Apply modern techniques

With globalization, all companies have to compete with companies. This is true not only in the Philippines, but also worldwide. To survive and compete successfully, it is worthwhile to learn modern micro-management skills to ensure high levels of productivity and controls. Throughout the year, find time to do this important and urgent activity of upgrading the company's management skills and systems.

### Continue updating

There is value to joining associations for many reasons. It is easier to be aware of significant national and international events and their repercussions to the company by being in a business association than when one is isolated from all of these. It is also a means of having stronger advocacy for the common causes—a stronger force that can voice its requests and positions to government and international bodies. Business associations can also provide opportunities for making lifelong friendships, the benefits of which goes far beyond pesos and dollars.

### Review business model

Radical changes in the global and national business environment have taken place. Major industry players are making radical changes which can affect your business. It is time to take a second look at your business to determine if the business model is still sound or to see if a change of strategy might be crucial for survival and growth in the future.

### Take time for others

Life and work might be hard for you. Business and profits are less than what you would wish it to be; but take time to look around. There are hundreds of others who are less fortunate than you. Take time to think of what you can do for them. Each one has their own unique opportunity to do things for others. When there does not seem to be much work to do while business is slow, time becomes available for others in need.

When we start to think and do something for others then we also open ourselves to see the good things that are in store for us in the future. The current economic hardships have forced and convinced many more policy makers that we should put more emphasis on agriculture. Agriculture contributes only 20 percent of our gross domestic product but supports more that 60 percent of our population. Reforms also seem to be starting to take place in our educational system. We will need less foreign exchange for the import of our fuel oil as the per-barrel world market prices of oil are expected to remain low next year and as we put on-stream our own gas and oil production. These can be considered as positive macro shifts in the Philippine economic equation.

### Take time to pray

It is the season for reflecting on one's innermost values. Companies are reflections of the principles and values of its owners and managers. These principles and values are cascaded down as policies and procedures, thus it is important that as part of the company, each one gives quality service.

*"May the God of strength be with you*
*Making you be steady and determined*
*So that others whose hand you hold*
*And lives you touch may feel the protection*
*Of your inner strength. Let this sustain you*
*In the winding rough roads of life you travel.*
*May the God of Strength be with you."*

*(This article reflects the personal views of the author who is a member and past governor of the Management Association of the Philippines and chair of De Leon Consulting. The MAP secretariat and the author may be reached via mapsec@globenet.com.ph)*

# A text 'website' for Smart users

INDIVIDUALS and corporations interested in sharing information with the public will soon be able to create their own interactive text-based "websites" that can be accessed with the use of a Smart GSM cellphone.

"Smart zed is now developing interactive text sites which are actually websites on purely SMS interface," said Edgardo Bautista, head of product and business development of Smart Communications.

Speaking at the Smart Mobile Clinic for Media held in Cebu last week, Bautista said that this interactive text site (ITS) service has unique features and capabilities. For instance, ITS has advanced site database search and search engine that accepts registrations and returas multiple results upon demand.

"These features make for great applications for mobile advertisement pages, directory, or personal profile book," said Bautista.

Interactive Text Site works by allowing a subscriber to create his/her own text site and to upload content to it. Information can be anything you want it to be. Other subscribers can then access the information you placed in your text site by using the advanced site database search and search engine called Yohoo.

ITS works like a website. One can create a homepage and several other pages of information united by a single text site address.

The subscriber will be then equipped to browse through sub-pages within a site, select options, and search for information within a site or redirect query to other text site addresses.

"ITS will transform the text environment into a dynamically changing world that resembles the World Wide Web," said Bautista.

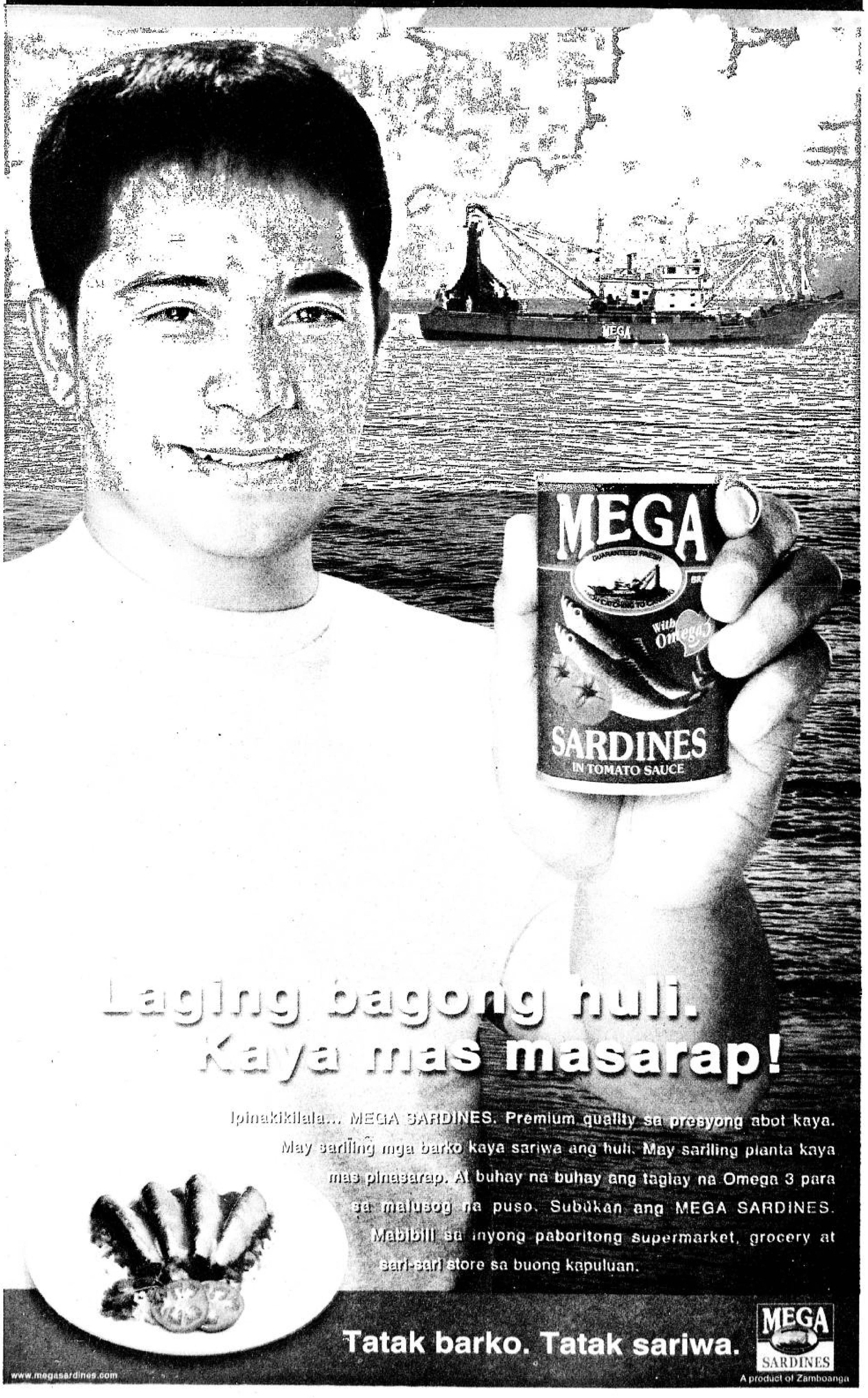
Sponsored by Smart Communications, the Mobile Clinic is an innovative customer care service designed to bring Smart closer to its subscribers. These clinics, which also offer product presentations, demos, and free phone check-ups, are conducted within the key customers' premises in order to handle their sales and after-sales requirements more efficiently.

The clinic held in Cebu was attended by members of the media and the IT community.

**MAXXIUM PHILIPPINES NEW CORPORATE ADDRESS**

MAXXIUM Philippines Inc., the country's premier company handling various international fine wines and spirits, has transferred its business office to Unit 1501-1502 of The Taipan Place Building at Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. The various brands distributed by Maxxium Philippines Inc. include Remy Martin Fine Champagne Cognac, Remy Silver, Jim Beam Bourbon Whiskey, Famous Grouse Whisky, Macallan Single Malt Whisky; wines – Canyon Road, Geyser Peak, Barwang, Wolf Blass, Canepa, Paul Jaboulet, A. De Luze, Louis Latour, Hugel, Piper Heidsieck champagne and liqueurs – Bols, Passoa and Cointreau. The marketing and sales team behind Maxxium Philippines is composed of Randy Uson, senior product manager; Joann Tioseco, wines product manager; Joseph Cruel, whiskey product manager; Roland Figueroa, off premise manager and Alan Tolentino, on premise manager. Maxxium Philippines can be called at 634-5370 to 72.

Congratulations to **CESAR MONTANO** for winning the **Best Actor Award** in the recently - concluded **Metro Manila Filmfest**.



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## Metro Manila Film Festival at SM Cinema

THE 27th Metro Manila Film Festival reeled off at SM Cinemas Dec. 25. Movie enthusiasts not only in Metro Manila but also in key cities around the country are now enjoying simultaneous screening of these much-awaited entries at SM's provincial malls.

For the first time, moviegoers at SM City Bacoor, SM City Pampanga, SM City Cebu, SM City Iloilo and SM City Davao are now able to get a piece of film festival action the same time as those in Metro Manila do.

The 2001 Metro Manila Film Festival showcases several must-see entries, topbilling some of the country's most talented and popular stars. These include: Star Cinema's ''Bagong Buwan'', which stars Cesar Montano and Jericho Rosales; Viva Films' ''Tatarin'' topbilled by Dina Bonnevie, Edu Manzano and Rica Peralejo; and MAQ Films' ''Yamashita'' with Amado Goyena, Danilo Barrios, and Carlo Munoz.

Also not to be missed are Regal Entertainment's ''Bahay ni Lola'' with Gloria Romero and Aiza Seguerra; E-Corp Films' ''Di Kita Ma Reach'' starring Mikey Arroyo and LJ Moreno; Good Harvest Production's ''Hubog'' with Assunta da Rossi and Wendell Ramos and Maverick Films' ''Susmaryosep (4 Fathers)'' with Bobby Andrews, Bojo Molina, Polo Ravales and Gerald Madrid.

Catch the yearend's best homegrown hits at the 2001 Metro Manila Film Festival at all SM cinemas until January.

## Ambassador to UN presents credentials

AMBASSADOR Alfonso T. Yuchengco, the new Philippine Ambassador to the United Nations, recently presented his credentials to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. Ambassador Yuchengco assumed his post in time for the visit of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo who recently addressed the UN General Assembly.

Ambassador Yuchengco, who was ambassador to China during the Aquino administration and ambassador to Japan in the Ramos administration, has the crucial task of projecting the Philippine position on challenging issues facing the world today. Of foremost importance to the Philippines are concerns related to human rights, labor rights, disarmament, development and international security. His networks as a diplomat and an international businessman will be very helpful to the Philippine mission at the United Nations.

## Bankard 'Charge and Win' until today

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## Northwest Airlines makes travel easier

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## Smart shopping at DFP

DUTY Free Philippines (DFP) has a smart advice to all shoppers who would like to avoid the Christmas and New Year's rush. Michael Christian Kho, DFP general manager, suggests that customers shop at Duty Free Philippines Fiestamall during its "smart shopping hours", which is from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. Store hours have been extended from 9 a.m. to 2 a.m. until today, Dec. 31, to accommodate the increased number of arriving *balikbayans*, OFWs and foreign tourists.

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CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor ■ LITO B. ZULUETA, Subsection Editor
Arts & Design

"THE SECRET Garden": Charming Repertory musical

# Cheers and jeers in the year of arts

BY AMADÍS MA. GUERRERO
*Contributor*

**AND the arts marched on in the year 2001, delighting audiences, viewers and readers, gaining new adherents, and eliciting cheers and jeers from the critics.**

The Philippine Madrigal Singers celebrated their 38th anniversary with the launching of a biography of their founder and choirmaster Andrea O. Veneracion, "A Life Shaped by Music" (wasn't this the title of a biography of the American composer Charles Ives) by poet Marjorie Evasco—and with a special anniversary concert at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

It was a festive occasion and a full house, with mostly young, presumably music students. The venerable Veneracion (pun not necessarily intended) chose the occasion to retire, and to turn over the reins (the baton, I mean) to young Mark Anthony Carpio.

The repertoire consisted mostly of unfamiliar songs and compositions rendered in a slow, muted style, which put at least two concertgoers within sight to sleep. It was, in short, a highfalutin performance cheered on by the music students. But the music laypersons and the general public felt left out.

There were book launchings galore, giving the lie to the assertion that Filipinos don't read. Well, okay, most of them just read the comics and the tabloids but, among the middle- and upper-income groups, there is a substantial audience for good and fairly good books.

The book launching of the year was the 2001 Mega Book Launch II at the University of the Philippines, Diliman. A total of 18 books on myriad fields were launched, including: "Singsing na Pangkasal" by Lazaro Francisco, "A Book of Dreams" by Cristina Pantoja-Hidalgo and "Knife's Edge: Selected Essays" by Edel E. Garcellano.

A new published novel by Francisco, who has been bypassed again by the National Artist Awards committee, is always cause for celebration. Multiawarded Pantoja-Hidalgo comes up with a second novel. And Garcellano, a bilingual poet and novelist, emerges as an essayist-critic of note.

## 'Bastos'

Another well-attended event was the launching of "Eros Pinoy" (Anvil Publishing), a collection of erotic poetry and visual art edited by Alfred Yuson, Bencab and Virgilio Aviado. The poems were complemented by explicit illustrations which a woman poet, who is no prude, found "*bastos.*"

Ballet Philippines presented something new, "Shoes," while Ballet Manila gained a bigger

CHEERS/ p.C2

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LAST NOTE

# The year's musical highlights

By Pablo A. Tariman
*Contributor*

**SEASONED Filipino and foreign artists kept the music scene alive during the year that saw the fall of Joseph Estrada and the rise of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.**

The last time Erap was seen in the music scene was when he was listening to the Saint-Saens cello concerto in Malacañang as performed by the Peace Philharmonic with Wilfredo Pasamba as soloist. The same orchestra returned to Malacañang a year later with President Macapagal-Arroyo listening to soprano Rachelle Gerodias and tenor Nolyn Cabahug sing "Bayan Ko."

My soloists of the year are Cecile Licad (with the Philippine Philharmonic under Ruggero Barbieri and the Asian Youth Orchestra under Sergiu Commisiona) performing Rachmaninoff No. 2 and Variations on a Theme by Paganini; Alexandru Tomescu (with the National Philharmonic Orchestra, the Crosswave Symphony and the Manila Symphony II) performing the Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky and Sibelius concertos; Jue Yao (with the Peace Philharmonic and the Suk Chamber Orchestra) performing the Mendelssohn concerto and Vivaldi's "Four Seasons"; and Renato Lucas (with the Peace Philharmonic) performing the Elgar Cello Concerto.

**WILFREDO** Pasamba

**CONDUCTOR-VIOLINIST** Redentor Romero will be sorely missed.

**CELLIST-CONDUCTOR** Renato Lucas

Licad, Tomescu, Yao and Lucas displayed unerring musicality and exemplary discipline not to mentioned good rapport with the orchestra. In that sense, they were also sensitive chamber musicians. Tomescu debuted at the CCP accompanied by J. Greg Zuniega in a special tribute to Redentor Romero. The Romanian gave a definitive interpretation of Ravel, Franck, Bartok and Paganini pieces.

My flutist of the year is Korean Hae Won Shin who debuted at the Francisco Santiago Hall under the auspices of the National Philharmonic Society. This flutist, a student of Julius Baker, did her mentor proud with her dazzling legato and showed it in the tribute to Romero in the piece "Meditation" from Massenet's "Thais."

My conductors of the year are Sergiu Commisiona leading the Asian Youth Orchestra and Adrian Brown conducting the Peace Philharmonic. Commissiona's reading of Dvorak's Symphony No. 8 and Stravinsky's "Firebird Suite" drew the best from the young musicians, while Brown's rendering of Elgar's "Enigma Variations" also elicited the best from the young musicians of Southern Philippines.

The singers who kept vocal connoisseurs happy were soprano Rachelle Gerodias, tenors Lemuel de la Cruz and Gary del Rosario and bass baritone Jonathan Zaens. Gerodias dazzled with her Sisa aria from "Noli Me Tangere," Del Rosario stunned with his "Nessun Dorma" while De la Cruz proved a supreme interpreter with his moving and tender "Del cabello mas sutil" by Obradors. Zaens graced the Filipino Artists Series once again, but the bigger story is that he debuted with the Prague State Opera as Leporello in Mozart's "Don Giovanni."

The undisputed music missionaries of the year are the tandem of Ingrid Sala-Santamaria and Reynaldo Reyes who brought the Tchaikovsky, Schumann, Grieg and Rachmaninoff concertos to Cebu, Davao, Cagayan, Isabela, Catanduanes, Bangkok and Florida. They did not just perform; they also had fruitful dialogues with seasoned music lovers and won new converts.

It was the year noted music personalities passed away, such as conductor Redentor Romero, soprano Lilia Reyes and conductor Bernardino Custudio. Abroad, violinist Isaac Stern passed away. Yue Yao, his student, paid him tribute in her Cebu and Manila concerts with the Suk Chamber Orchestra.

The Suk Chamber Orchestra is my orchestral ensemble of the year. This is a chamber orchestra that sounds as one and with such musicality unheard of in other orchestras.

**CECILE** Licad: Soloist of the Year

It was also the year San Miguel Philharmonic was formed; it rehearsed assiduously without the benefit of a formal debut. It was the year Peace Philharmonic temporarily suspended its season to save on resources. It was the year the Philippine Philharmonic toured Europe and won foreign audiences.

### Here and there

A YOUNG pianist to watch is 15-year-old Oliver Salonga, the first-prize winner in the B-1 piano category in the recently concluded National Music Competition for Young Artists (Namcya). Now a graduating student of the Philippine High School for the Arts, Salonga is also the first-prize winner in the A-2 piano category in last year's edition of Namcya. In the jury were Regalado Jose, Jonathan Coo and J.E. Cruz.

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# Cheers and jeers in the year of arts

(From page C1)

audience when it transferred to Star City. And the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra went on a successfully tour of Europe.

Repertory Philippines' Cinderella" was a big hit among children and young students. And this made me wonder: Since most Rep players are fluent in Filipino, why don't they make a musical out of our own "Ibong Adarna"? The results—and the feedback—should be very interesting.

There was no "big" Rep musical at the Meralco Theater for 2001, but there was the charming "The Secret Garden." The music by Lucy Simon was not really that memorable. But one aria, "Come to My Garden," stood out; and it was hauntingly interpreted by soprano Karla Gutierrez, one of our outstanding singers.

Performance-wise at the Rep, it was the year of Liezl Batucan, who in several plays proved herself an adroit comedienne, a fine dramatic actress and dancer as well.

Opera fans welcomed the staging of Verdi's "Il Trovatore" and Bizet's "Carmen" (by the Philippine Opera Company and Tanghalang Pilipino, respectively), although the Filipino adaptations were not resounding successes.

But "Ang Trahedya ni Carmen," translated by Jose B. Capino, proved to be a bravura vehicle for the ensemble actors—McDo Bolaños, Edwin Flores, Paolo O'Hara and Rosanna Ordoñez—who were both funny and touching as the overseas Filipino workers.

Romania's Alexandru Tomescu, a major violinist, once again dazzled Manilans with his wizardry in a series of concerts, including a tribute to the late maestro Redentor Romeo and a dinner-tertulia at Ilustrado Restaurant given by an American couple, Wes and Jacqui Loran, who were celebrating their anniversary.

### Soprano

Soprano Rachelle Gerodias impressed the audience at Ilustrado. And at CCP's Tanghalang Aurelio V. Tolentino, Tomescu teamed up with Korean flutist Hae Won Shin and pianist J. Grieg Zuniega.

**REPERTORY** comedy "It Had to Be You"

Among the compositions they played were "Lagi Kitang Naalala" (Silos, arranged by Romero) and "Pasko Na Sinta Ko" (Francis Dandan), two songs that become even more beautiful when transcribed for such romantic instruments as the piano, violin and flute.

There was a preponderance of plays in English, all catering to middle-class sensibilities. In view of this, the productions of Dulaang Talyer gained in importance. These included "Bilog" and "Obra Maestra."

A new kid on the theater block is Company Call, which aims to mount "actor-driven" plays that highlight socially relevant themes, the human condition and audience involvement. Its maiden presentation at CCP's Tanghalang Huseng Batute was Tony Perez's "North Diversion Road," directed by Dennis Marasigan.

2002 promises to be just as lively. Coming attractions for the first two months of the year include "Luna," an historical musical by Tanghalang Pilipino; a tribute to Atang de la Rama by cultural ozar Danny Dolor, and "Uyayi ng Ulan," a children's musical by Dulaang Talyer.

"ANG TRAHEDYA ni Carmen": Bravura opera

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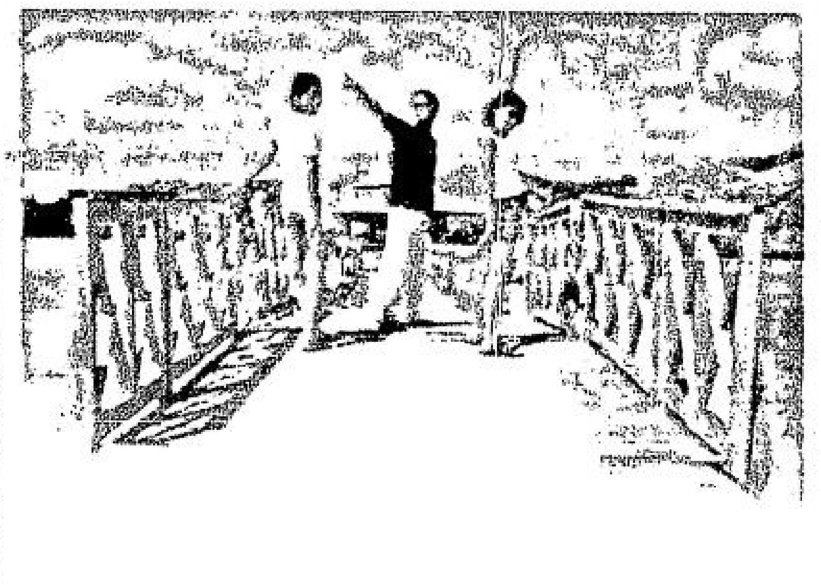
**JUICE** channel will feature youth concerns.

**THE PEOPLE** behind Isla and Juice

# New cable channels focus on social advocacy, urban youth lifestyle

(From page C3)

ness" among Filipinos.

### Civil society

Isla will be a 24-hour channel on cable TV featuring shows that zero in on issues and subjects that affect people's lives. It will communicate initiatives by government, civil society and the private sector that lead to genuine results but are simple enough to implement and replicate. It will feature good news in the Philippines amid the pervading bad news locally and globally.

Among the issues that Isla will feature are health and welfare; self-improvement programs; the environment; education; livelihood and poverty alleviation; indigenous peoples; graft and corruption; history and heritage; drugs and crimes; arts and culture; child abuse and family issues; peace and human rights; and women's issues.

The program lineup includes "Entrepinoy" (a how-to program that will redirect antipoverty efforts to creating equity, encourage livelihood and show the way to entrepreneurship), "Pinoy Fit" (with features on health concerns and alternative interventions), "Ecotours" (which promotes sensible and sustainable tourism, with focus on protected areas), "Green and Golden" (a new look at clean and green projects and the recycling programs with explicit how-to kits any family can implement), "Urban Garden" (a fresh lookout successful community projects for others to follow), "People Power Series" (cases of people power and the modes and values by which people power is expressed) and "Documentaries" (dedicated to documentary-makers who look in-depth at the Filipino situation). There will also be interstitials, short features on inspiring messages and ideas, and promotion plugs for development initiatives and on people who have dedicated their lives to the country, significant historical events, and programs that viewers can support or participate in.

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### Youth interests

Juice will banner programs that match the top 10 interests of the youth, to wit: healthy lifestyle, cooking, music, personal grooming, communication gadgets and the Internet, sports, home decorating, financial and career investments, traveling and exercise. There will also be interstitials providing quick information, things tot think shout and light moments.

Juice's program lineup includes "Sidle Stitch" (a health and fitness magazine show), "Al Presto" (how-to of quick and impressive ideas for home entertainment or dating), "The Beat" (a magazine show on the music industry), "Kinky Machine" (covers, among others, fashion dos and tips on what's in), "Gizmo" (a funky telemagazine on the latest high-tech products), "Space" (practical and economical do-it-yourself tips on home decorating), "9 to 5 Plus" (a magazine show on work and careers), "Cryptical Grins" (travel adventures on roads less traveled), "Black Ops" (a furiously fast-paced game with a reality-TV feel, patterned after military games and Gotcha!) and "Twentysomething" (how-to on facing life issues with a positive outlook.)

**ISLA** will have programs on entrepreneurship.

Abrera describes Juice as an interactive channel that will deal with and report on Filipino youth goings-on as well as encourage young people to use the channel to express their dreams and aspirations.

Both Isla and Juice being produced by the CCI Group composed of CCI Asia TV, which will take care of developing content; Oeno Systems, an integrated media production company specializing in integrated AVP and events management; Pangarap Services Inc., an agency servicing overseas Filipino organizations through the production of print and video requirements and the design and maintenance of a promo-oriented website for overseas Filipinos; and, Cyber Channels, an advertising company specializing in print and online advertising and promotions activities.

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**KIDS** from the San Vicente Elementary School were recently treated to a day of storytelling, games and learning by National Bookstore, Golden Books and the University Center Foundation. Highlight was the donation by Jaime Gregorio of Golden Books (fourth from left) of two sets of Golden Books—"Road to Reading" and "Golden Step Ahead"—to the UCF represented by Raffy Malicosio (fourth from right). Also in photo are teachers from San Vicente and Juliet Gako and Girlie Martizana of NBS.

# New cable channels focus on social advocacy, urban youth lifestyle

BY ED SANTOALLA
*Contributor*

**TWO new cable TV channels are being launched tonight that seek to give advocacy groups a dedicated medium for their messages and Filipino twentysomethings, a platform to show and celebrate their energies as well as their dreams and aspirations.**

Isla, the advocacy channel with the tagline "Together, we can be one island," seeks to harness people power to become a driving force in nation-building by communicating simple and replicable ways, by which socioeconomic, political, cultural and environmental problems can be solved.

Juice (100% Natural Slice of Life Squeezed Daily) is a local lifestyle channel mirroring the changing attitudes of the idealistic and high-tech savvy segment of the urban youth market that made possible Edsa II.

Both channels are being produced by the CCI Group, the same one that created Lakbay TV, the travel channel on cable TV now beloved by both virtual and real-time tourists and travelers.

"These are crazy ideas we've been toying around with for some time now," says Carlos Abrera, chair of CCI Asia Television, an independent broadcast content provider that conceptualized, managed and continues to produce programs for Lakbay TV. "We believe the times call for us to implement them," he adds.

Isla and Juice are being launched simultaneously tonight on Home Cable Channel 68.

According to Abrera, Isla, the advocacy channel, in particular, is a response to the need for a medium to counter what he calls the "constant bombardment [in media] of disheartening developments that quell negative self-image and helpless-

NEW/ p.C2

**SOCIAL** development issues will be the focus of Isla on Home Cable Channel 68.

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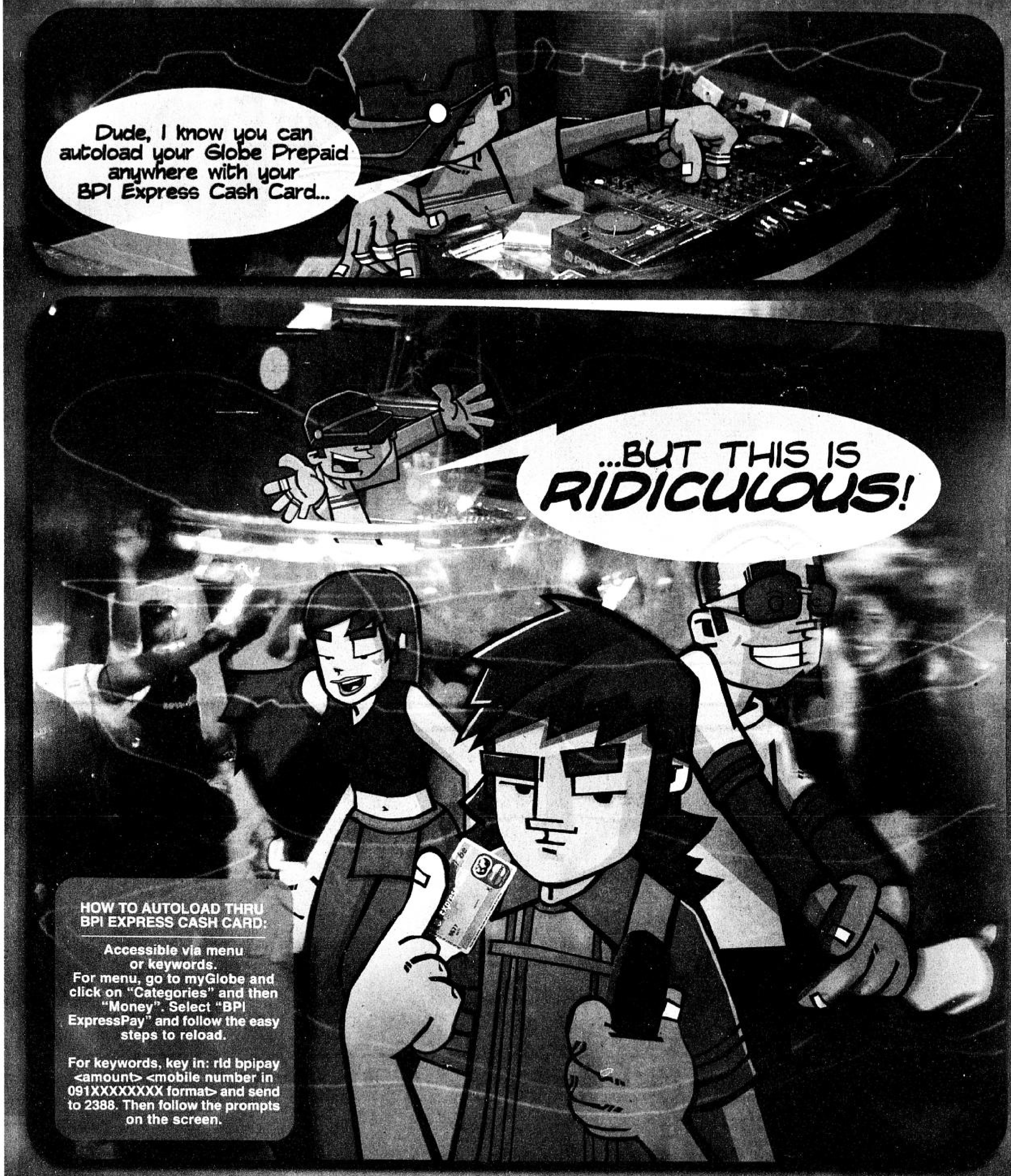
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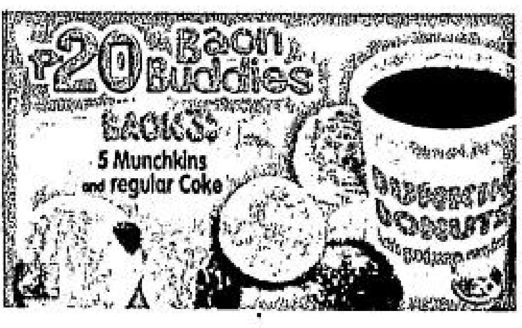
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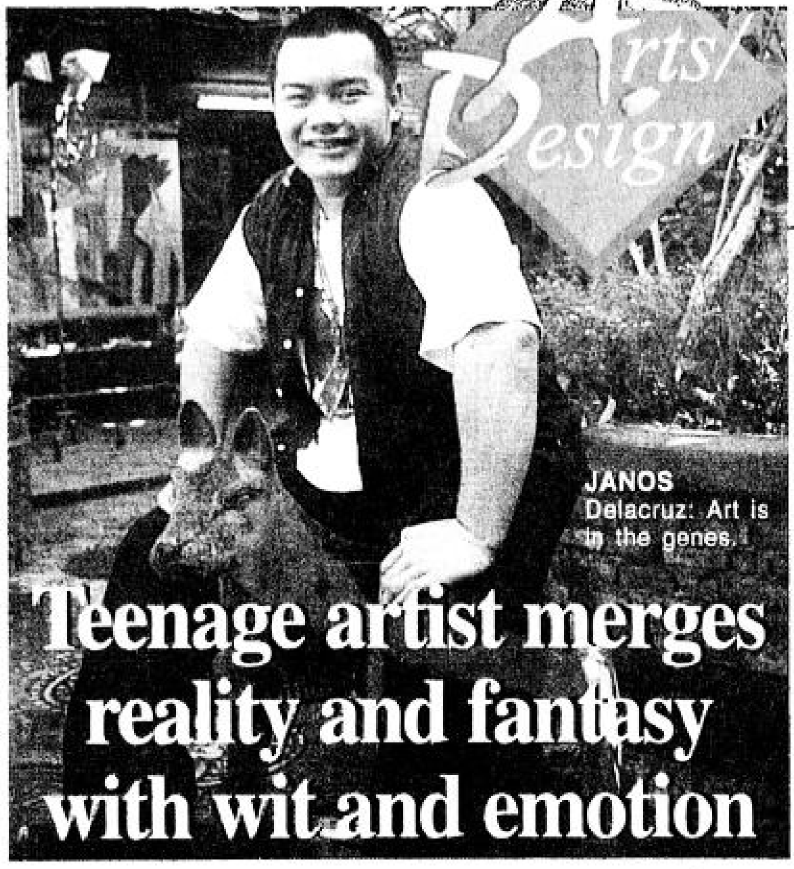
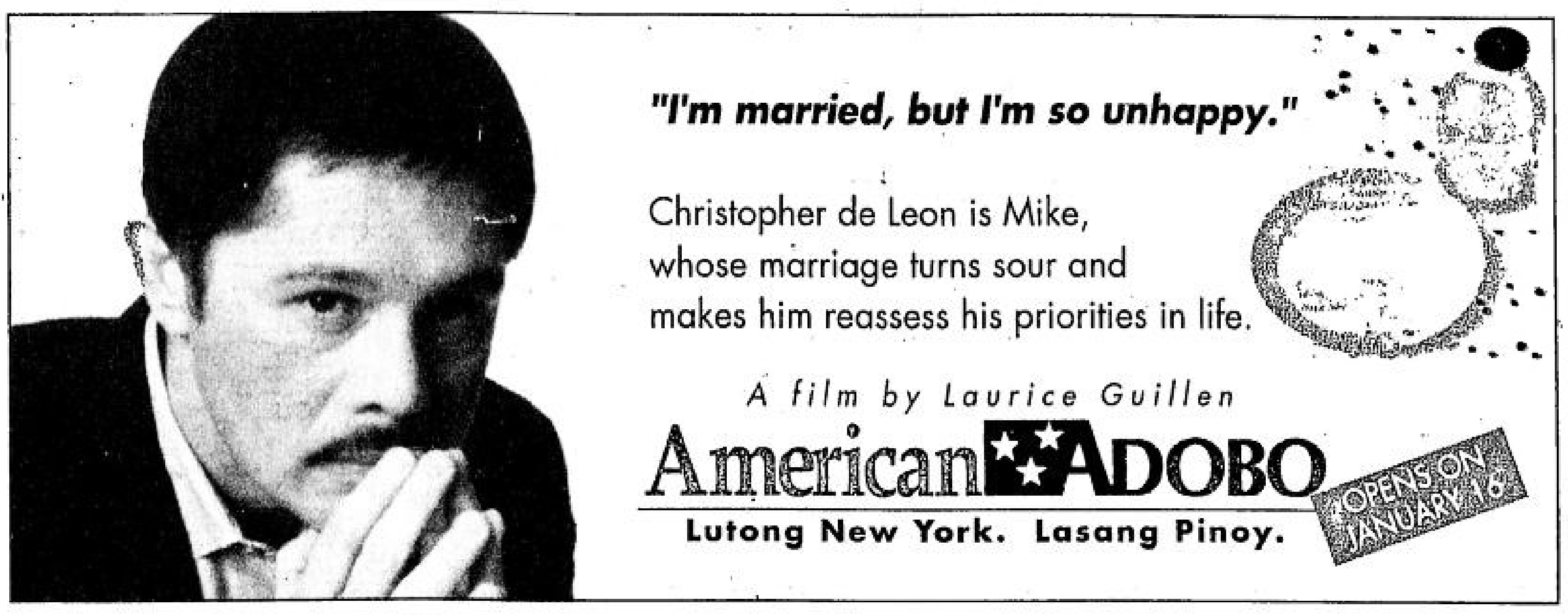


**JANOS** Delacruz: Art is in the genes.

# Teenage artist merges reality and fantasy with wit and emotion


"I'm married, but I'm so unhappy."

Christopher de Leon is Mike,
whose marriage turns sour and
makes him reassess his priorities in life.

A film by Laurice Guillen
American ADOBO
Lutong New York. Lasang Pinoy.
OPENS ON JANUARY 16

BY GINO DORMIENDO
*Contributor*

**HE would have easily fitted into the stereotypical image of today's crop of teenagers. Shy, a bit self-conscious, plumpish, 16-year-old Janos Delacruz knows, however, what he can do best: make pen and ink drawings of his day-to-day activities. And they are not ordinary doodlings but more like pages from a journal, which come complete with prose scribblings to accompany the illustrations, or vice versa, since both text and artwork easily spring out of his hyperactive mind and hand.**

At his first solo exhibition, "Olympus: The House of God" (Madrigal Art Center, until Jan. 30), Jan Olympus Salvador Delacruz—or Janos—has come up with a collection of pen-and-ink drawings made in the last three years. Impressive as they are, these drawings document the young artist's journey through life, his interaction with family (noted painter-printmaker Fil Delacruz is his father), his school activities (he is a senior student at St. Benedict's College), and his attempts to cope with the demands of the day-to-day world.

> Janos Delacruz's pen-and-ink drawings chart a young artist's journey through a life filled with the extraordinariness of ordinariness

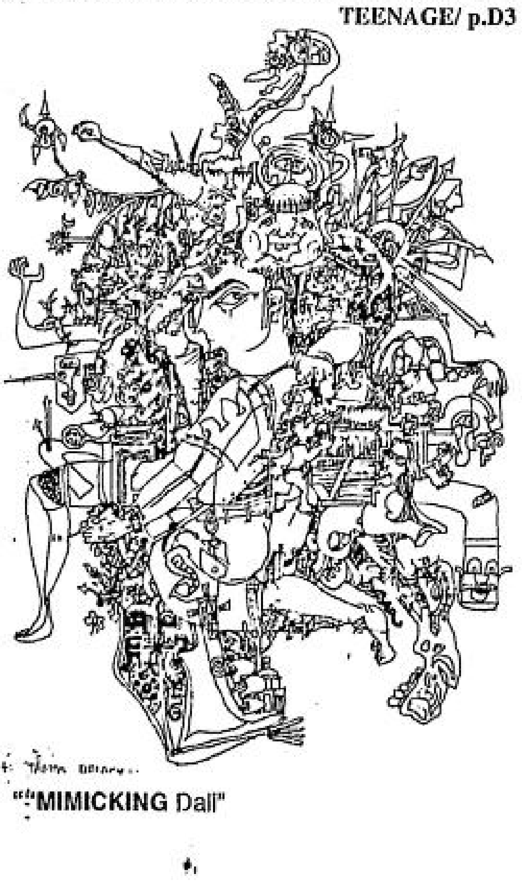
This young artist has, early on, honed his craft in drawing by observing his father at work in the latter's studio up in Soldiers' Hill in Muntinlupa. At an early age, he has developed his facility in art, learning the rudiments of sketching and shading and eschewing the animé style of illustration, which is popular with his peers.

For one so young, the works of Delacruz are surprisingly mature. They are replete with allusions to the surreal interplay between reality and fantasy, a running theme of his imagery. Thus, we see in such "sublime" works as "Crucifiction," the duality of Christ's image, evident in the artist's depiction of his human and divine personas, which he further relates to the never-ending battle between reality and fantasy.

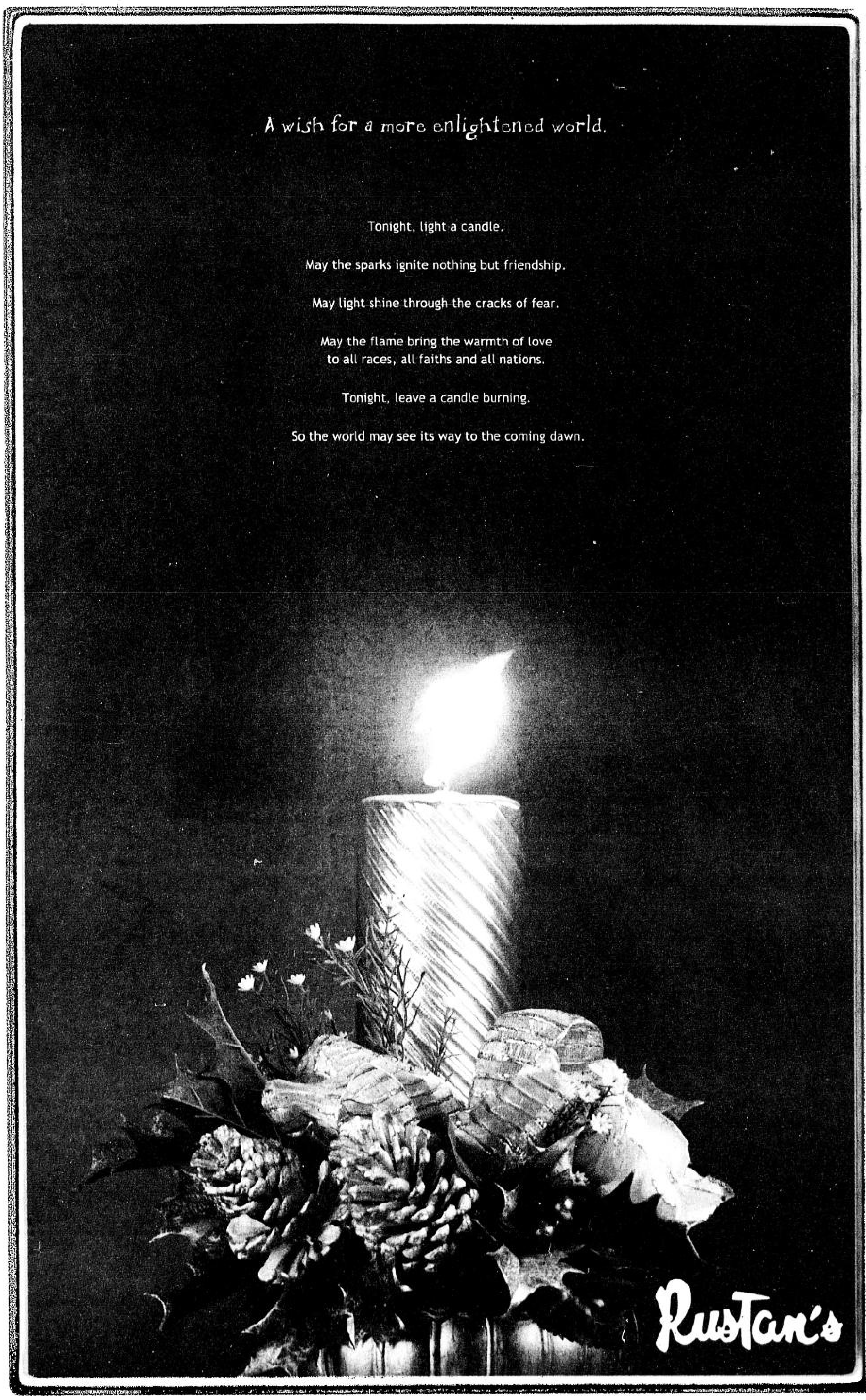
Even the subject of human ablutions in "Kahihiyan" can be an artistic mine to Delacruz's surreal imagination. He depicts a grotesque naked image seated on a toilet bowl, with indeterminate gender, more like an alien, its mind literally wired to a primal source of temptations lurking on the wall.

A number of his drawings have been culled from real-life characters in school, in the mall where he regularly goes to "observe humanity," and in the streets. "Apat na Mukha" are the faces of four classmates whom he describes as "characters" while "Bedista" is his interpretation of his school's

TEENAGE/ p.D3



"MIMICKING Dali"


A wish for a more enlightened world.

Tonight, light a candle.

May the sparks ignite nothing but friendship.

May light shine through the cracks of fear.

May the flame bring the warmth of love
to all races, all faiths and all nations.

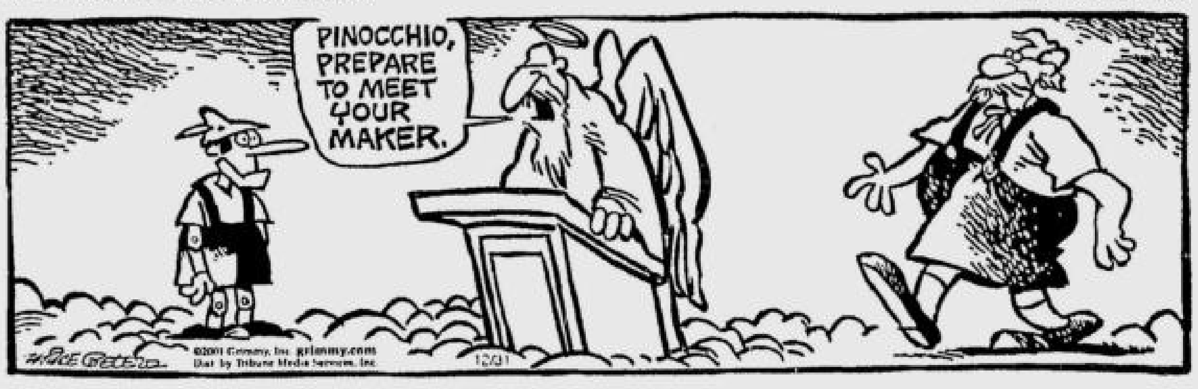
Tonight, leave a candle burning.

So the world may see its way to the coming dawn.

Rustan's

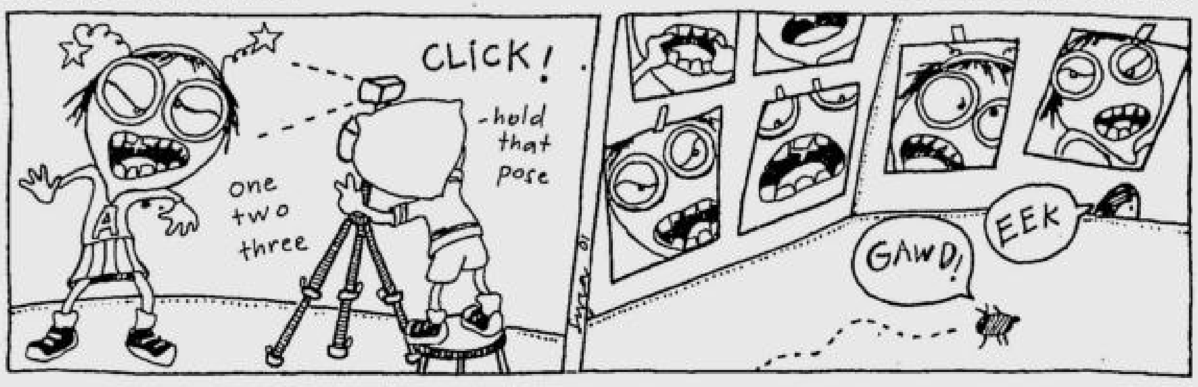
## MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


PINOCCHIO, PREPARE TO MEET YOUR MAKER.
©2001 Grimmy, Inc. grimmy.com
Dist by Tribune Media Services, Inc.
12/31

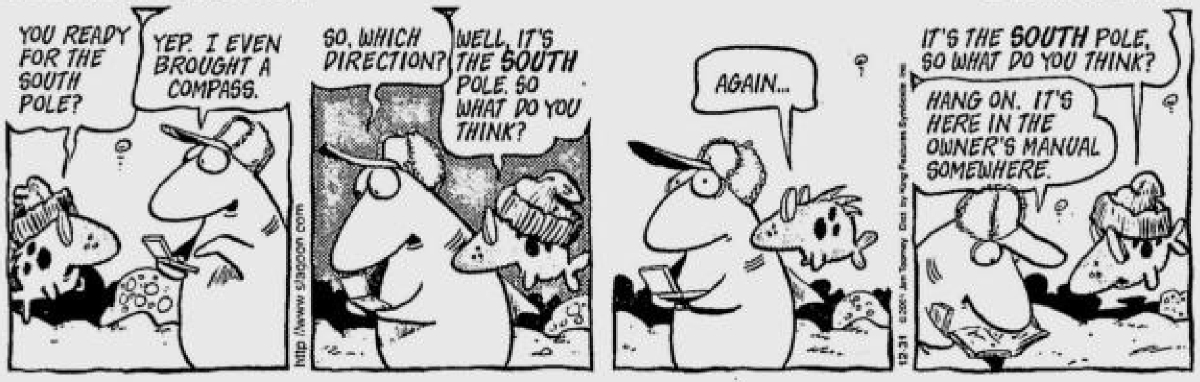
## ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


CLICK!
-hold that pose
one two three
GAWD!
EEK

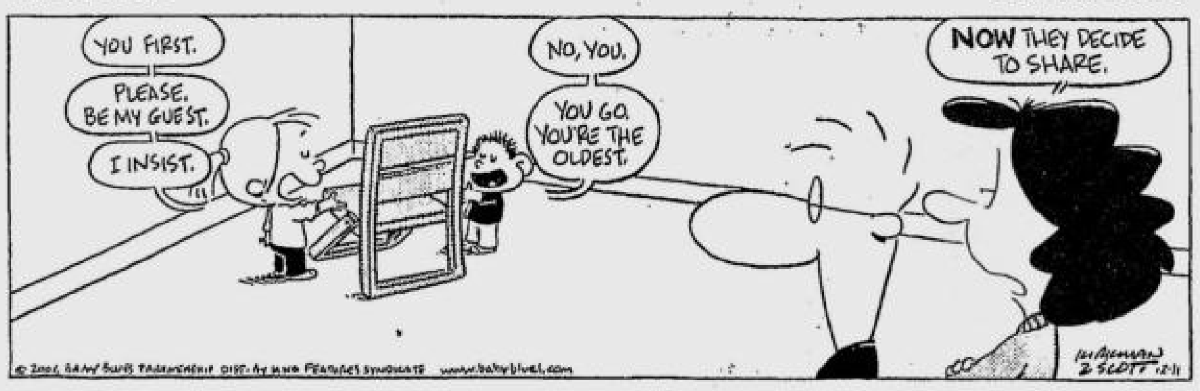
## SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


YOU READY FOR THE SOUTH POLE?
YEP. I EVEN BROUGHT A COMPASS.
SO, WHICH DIRECTION?
WELL, IT'S THE SOUTH POLE. SO WHAT DO YOU THINK?
AGAIN...
IT'S THE SOUTH POLE, SO WHAT DO YOU THINK?
HANG ON. IT'S HERE IN THE OWNER'S MANUAL SOMEWHERE.
http://www.slagoon.com
12-31

## BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


YOU FIRST.
PLEASE. BE MY GUEST.
I INSIST.
NO, YOU.
YOU GO. YOU'RE THE OLDEST.
NOW THEY DECIDE TO SHARE.
www.babyblues.com

## HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

**CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:** Joe McIntyre, Val Kilmer, Patti Smith, Anthony Hopkins

**Happy Birthday:** It's time to stop dreaming and start doing. You have experience, know-how and certainly the willingness to do whatever is necessary to make your mark. Put your wisdom to good use. Your numbers are 14, 18, 27, 33, 35, 49

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** You may not feel like kicking up your heels but you can still enjoy bringing in the New Year. Spending time with someone you care about will be far more satisfying.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20)):** You will want to spend your New Year's Eve meeting new people who could very likely make a difference to your future. Don't forget to call an older relative to wish him or her a happy New Year.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** Your emotions are leveling out and you are prepared to dazzle anyone you encounter. Bring in the New Year with optimism.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** Reflections of days gone by will enable you to put the year in perspective as well as plan for an engaging year ahead. You know the changes you want to make so put them into motion.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Take a breather and think about the changes you may want to make in the New Year. Do what's necessary to ensure that the upcoming year will be successful.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** It's time to be a little more sociable. You will have lots of fun if you get out and socialize today. The possibility of meeting a very special person is evident.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** Be careful not to do anything foolish like drink and drive. Spend quality time with people you are close to and avoid the party scene.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** You will meet engaging individuals through the company you keep today. Speeding or driving under the influence will result in legal problems in the New Year.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** It is best to keep a sharp eye on your belongings today. You may feel carefree but that doesn't give you the green light to overindulge.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** Problems with individuals who overindulge will surface if you don't protect yourself. Be patient but don't put up with anything that could put you in potential danger.

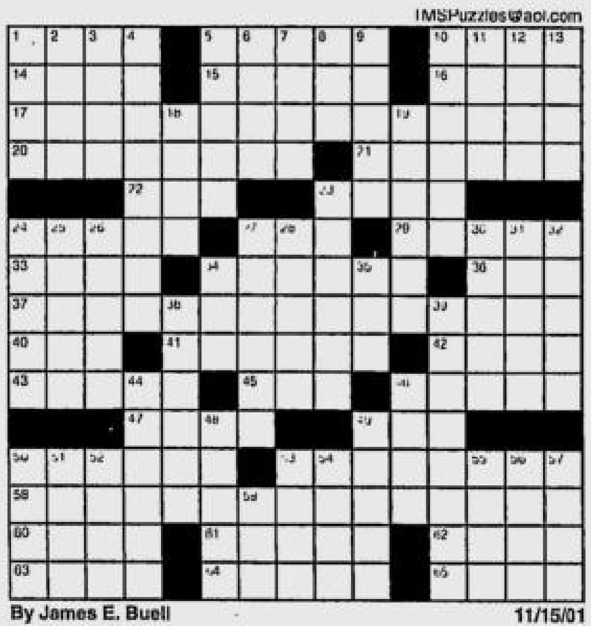
**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Overindulgence will lead to minor ill health and New Year's blues. Being responsible will help you begin the year properly.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** Don't let financial problems cause stress. You can spend less and enjoy yourself more if you stick to small intimate gatherings today.

**Birthday Baby:** You are insightful, caring and sensitive. You have built-in radar that allows you to tune in to those around you. You are helpful, giving and always ready to do for others.

## DAILY CROSSWORD

IMSPuzzles@aol.com



By James E. Buell
Edgewater, FL

11/15/01

### ACROSS

1 Roman-fleuve
5 '94 Keanu Reeves thriller
10 Large volume
14 Tan shade
15 Pasta choice
16 Foreboding sign
17 Question for the asking
20 Pasta ingredient
21 Saguaro
22 Ripken of the diamond
23 Old VHS rival
24 King of CNN
27 Before now
29 Hawke or Coen
33 China land
34 Ancient
36 Live and breathe
37 Question for an action
40 Court divider
41 Rest against
42 Red coin?
43 Twin Falls river
45 __ Paulo, Brazil
46 Garlic-basil sauce
47 Tree house?
49 Quote the raven
50 Golf swing
53 Shakes up
58 Question for the questionable
60 "Charley's __"
61 Kitchen appliance
62 Child's play
63 Admonishing sounds
64 Garage or yard events
65 Religious custom

### DOWN

1 Stitches
2 Sore spot
3 Metric unit of mass
4 Tyrant
5 Go bad
6 Teller's partner
7 New Age artist
8 Brian of Rock
9 Wild card, often
10 Alley denizen
11 Skip over
12 List of options
13 Means justifiers
18 Kill
19 Suitable viewing for all ages
23 Baby's bruise
24 Mown grasses
25 Extremely pale
26 Rodeo accessory
27 Appalled
28 Davis of "Thelma and Louise"
30 Pluto's realm
31 Looks __ everything
32 Boss!
34 Chowed down
35 Vietnam Memorial artist
38 Glosses over
39 Cool refreshment
44 Fife player?
46 Beaten way?
48 Children's Doctor?
49 Refers to as an example
50 Go after a fly
51 Hence
52 Relative status
53 M.P.'s quarry
54 Contribute
55 Spicy cuisine
56 River beneath the Brooklyn Bridge
57 Eyelid ailment
59 Bake-sale-holding grp.

### SATURDAY PUZZLE ANSWER

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| M | A | M | A | S | ■ | W | A | D | E | ■ | T | R | I | P |
| O | L | I | V | E | ■ | I | G | O | R | ■ | R | E | N | O |
| E | L | S | I | E | ■ | P | I | U | S | ■ | E | L | S | E |
| ■ | ■ | S | A | M | U | E | L | B | E | C | K | E | T | T |
| A | N | O | N | ■ | T | R | E | T | ■ | A | S | T | E | R |
| L | O | U | ■ | I | T | S | ■ | F | O | L | ■ | S | P | Y |
| S | E | R | E | N | E | ■ | G | U | L | L | S | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| O | L | I | V | E | R | G | O | L | D | S | M | I | T | H |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | E | X | E | R | T | ■ | C | O | U | R | S | E |
| A | C | C | ■ | A | D | A | ■ | U | R | N | ■ | R | A | N |
| B | L | A | N | C | ■ | D | I | N | O | ■ | A | I | R | S |
| J | O | N | A | T | H | A | N | S | W | I | F | T | ■ | ■ |
| U | N | I | T | ■ | O | B | O | E | ■ | S | O | A | R | S |
| R | E | N | T | ■ | U | L | N | A | ■ | M | U | T | T | S |
| E | D | G | Y | ■ | R | E | E | L | ■ | S | L | E | E | T |

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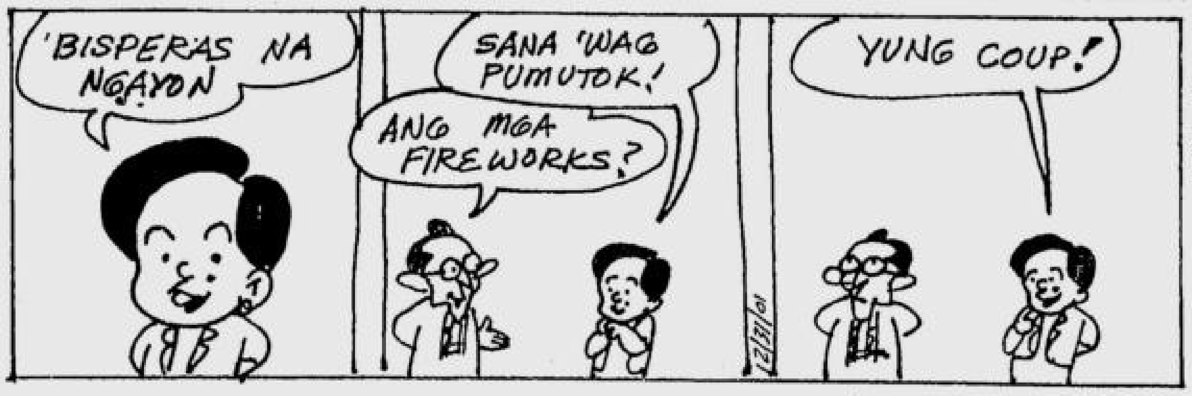
11/15/01

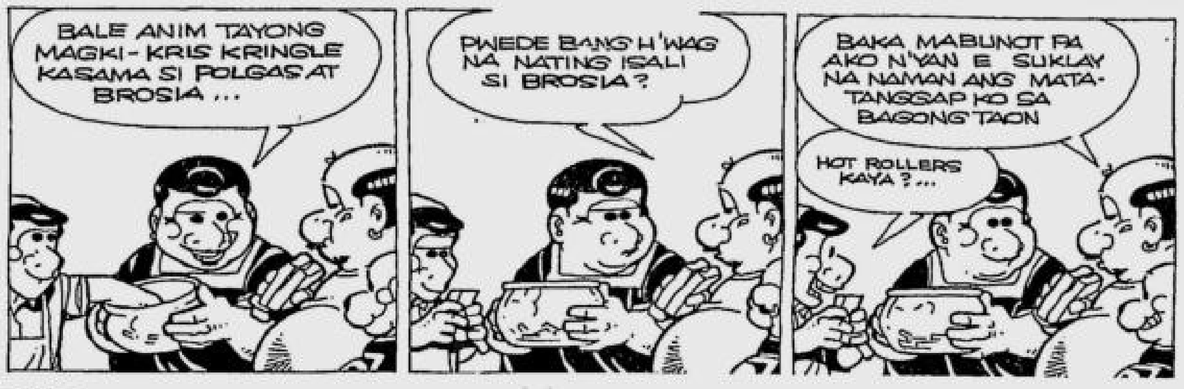
## A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


'BISPERAS NA NGAYON
SANA 'WAG PUMUTOK!
ANG MGA FIREWORKS?
YUNG COUP!
12/31/01

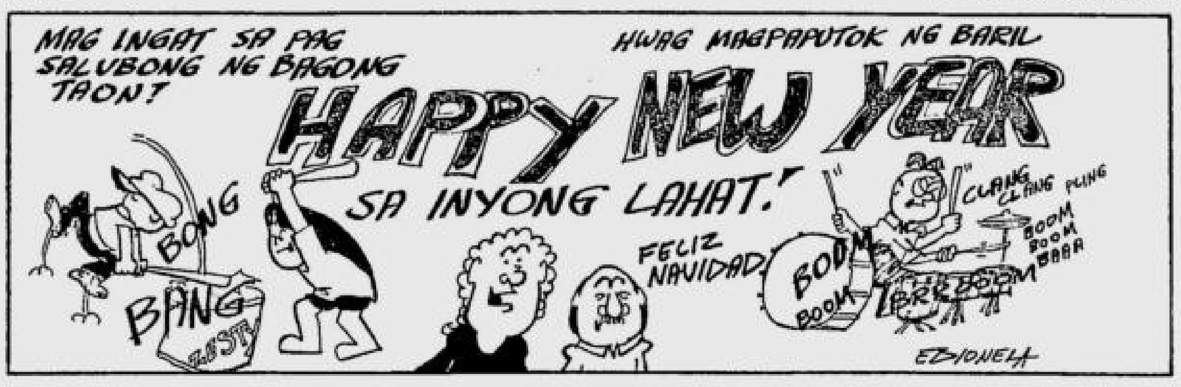
## PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


BALE ANIM TAYONG MAGKI-KRIS KRINGLE KASAMA SI POLGAS AT BROSIA ...
PWEDE BANG H'WAG NA NATING ISALI SI BROSIA?
BAKA MABUNOT PA AKO N'YAN E SUKLAY NA NAMAN ANG MATATANGGAP KO SA BAGONG TAON
HOT ROLLERS KAYA ?...

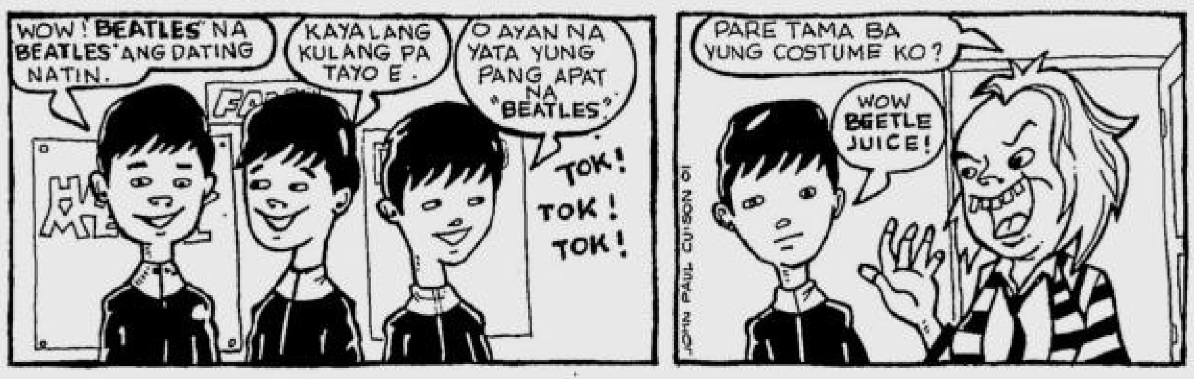
## SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


MAG INGAT SA PAG SALUBONG NG BAGONG TAON!
HWAG MAGPAPUTOK NG BARIL
HAPPY NEW YEAR
SA INYONG LAHAT!
BONG
BANG
FELIZ NAVIDAD!
BOOM BOOM
CLANG CLANG PLING
BOOM BOOM BAAA
BRRBOOM
EDIONELA

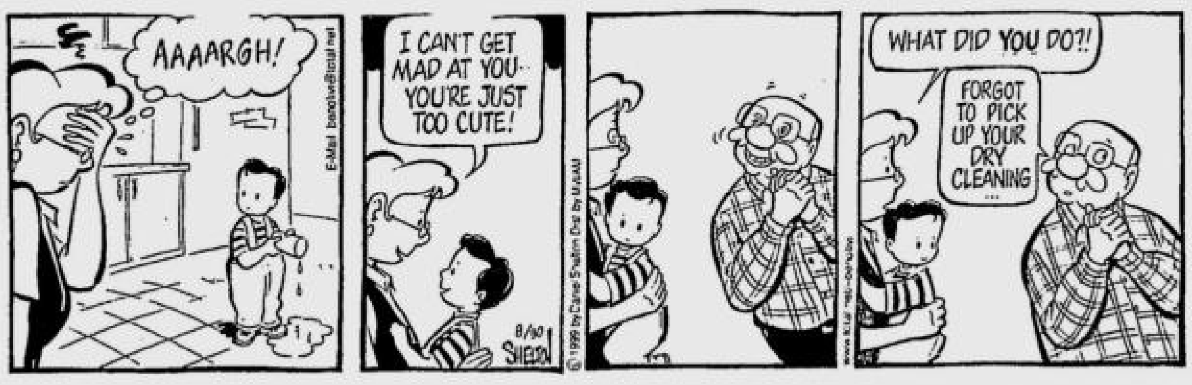
## GARAPATA BLOOD

BY JOHN PAUL CUISON


WOW! BEATLES NA BEATLES ANG DATING NATIN.
KAYA LANG KULANG PA TAYO E.
O AYAN NA YATA YUNG PANG APAT NA "BEATLES"
TOK! TOK! TOK!
PARE TAMA BA YUNG COSTUME KO?
WOW BEETLE JUICE!
JOHN PAUL CUISON 01

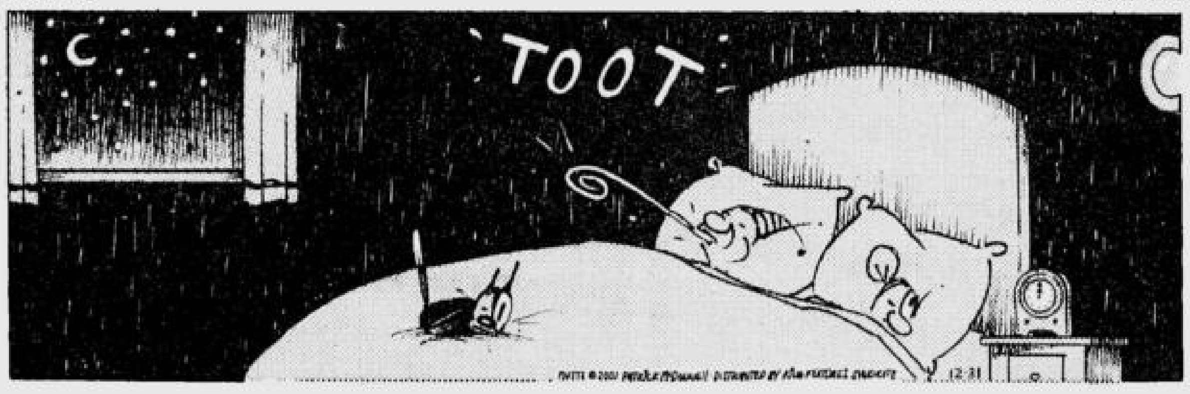
## BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


AAAARGH!
I CAN'T GET MAD AT YOU-- YOU'RE JUST TOO CUTE!
WHAT DID YOU DO?!
FORGOT TO PICK UP YOUR DRY CLEANING ...
8/30
SHELTON

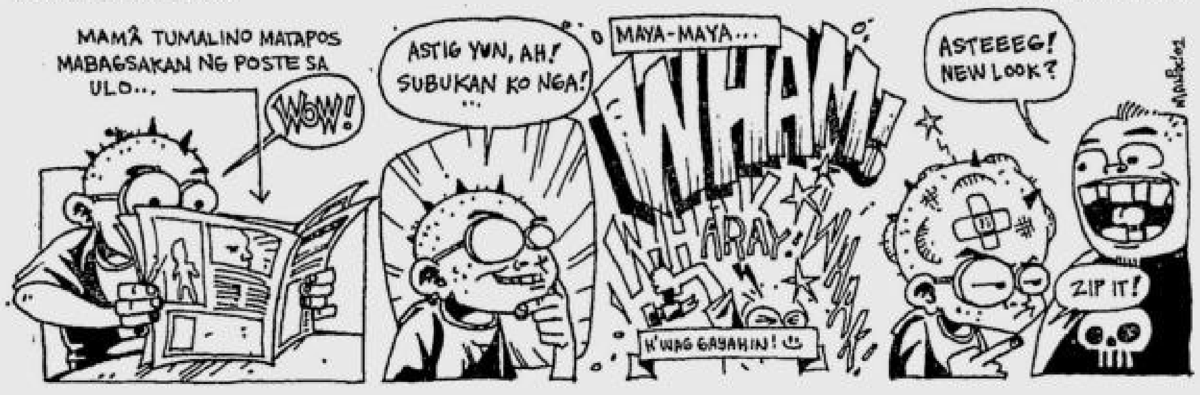
## MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL



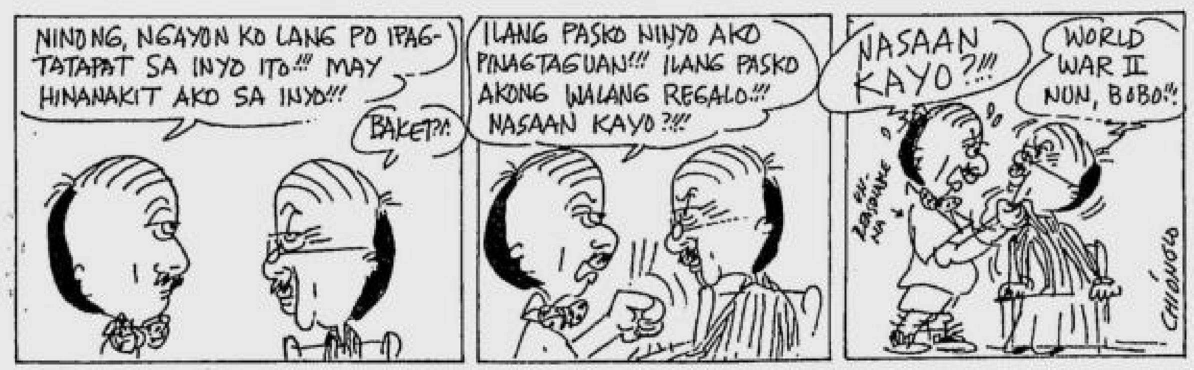
## KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


MAMÀ TUMALINO MATAPOS MABAGSAKAN NG POSTE SA ULO...
WOW!
ASTIG YUN, AH! SUBUKAN KO NGA! ...
MAYA-MAYA...
WHAM!
ARAY!
K'WAG GAYAHIN!
ASTEEEG! NEW LOOK?
ZIP IT!

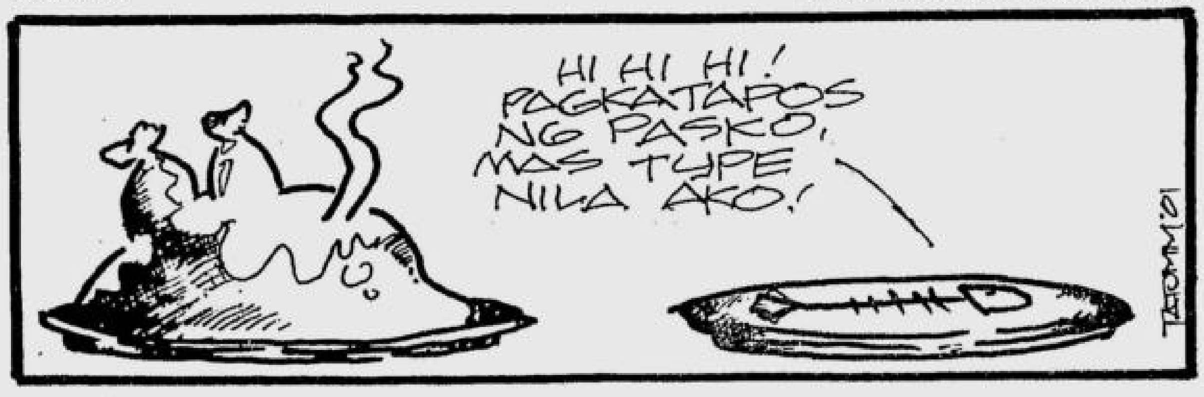
## LOVEKNOTS

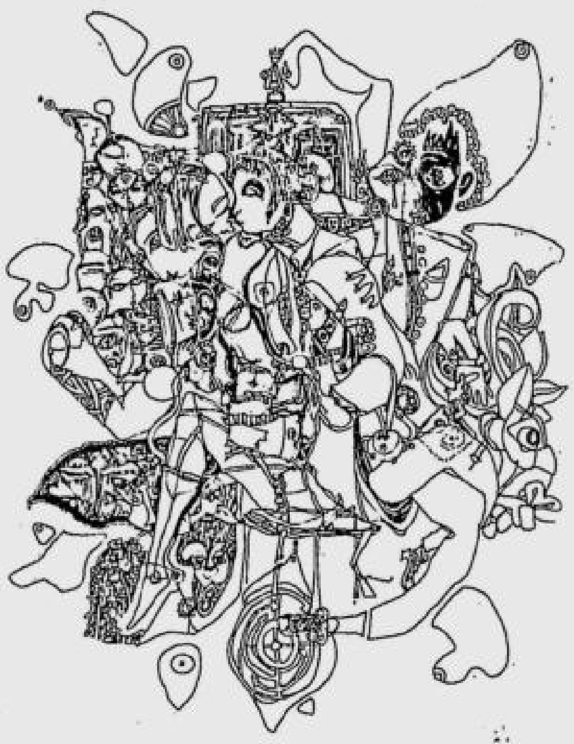
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


NINONG, NGAYON KO LANG PO IPAGTATAPAT SA INYO ITO!!! MAY HINANAKIT AKO SA INYO!!!
BAKET?!
ILANG PASKO NINYO AKO PINAGTAGUAN!!! ILANG PASKO AKONG WALANG REGALO!!! NASAAN KAYO?!!!
NASAAN KAYO?!!!
WORLD WAR II NUN, BOBO!!
CHIONGLO

## TULDOK

BY PAPU & TITO MILAMBILING


HI HI HI! PAGKATAPOS NG PASKO, MAS TYPE NILA AKO!
TATOMM '01



"KALAGUYO"

COLLEGE
FINE ARTS
CLASS '74

**JANOS** with his mother Marlu and father, noted painter-printmaker Fil Delacruz

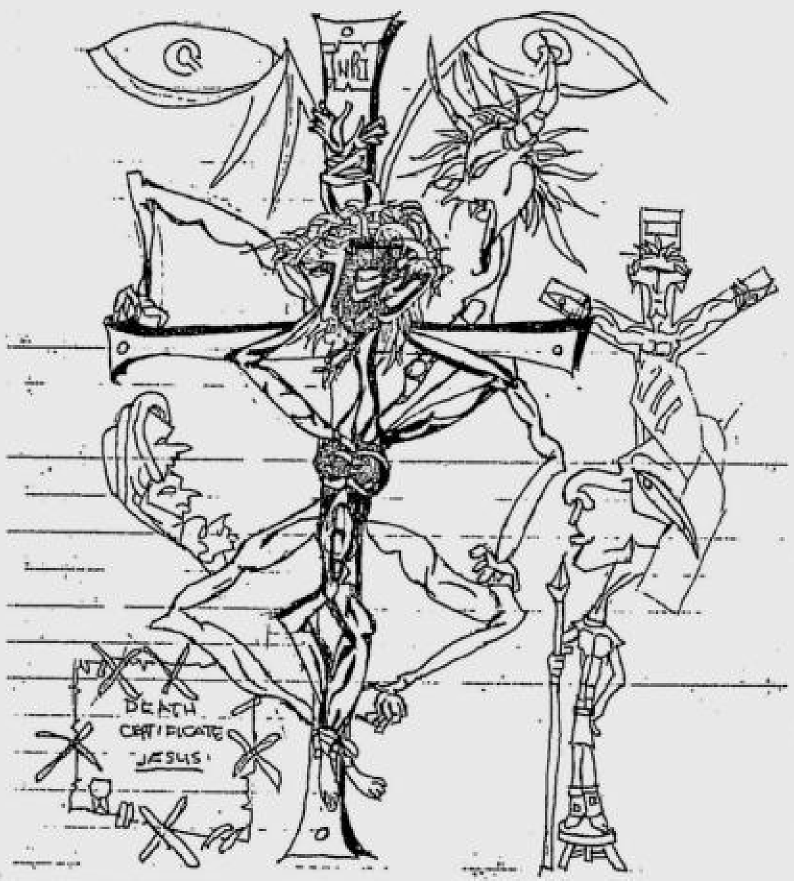
# Teenage artist merges reality and fantasy with wit and emotion

**(From page D1)**

upright student, which is, of course, far from typical, with its gallery of masks, his own as well as those of others, obviously alluding to the faces one must put in this Jungian world where appearances can indeed be deceiving.

The more successfully realized pieces are, however, those that take on larger-than-life, yet personal realms. In "Mimicking Dali," he proffers images that would have made his spiritual mentor proud. One needs to subject the work to the minutest scrutiny to find visual puns he had thrown in, such as the artist's emerging self-portrait amid a sea of faces. In "Anthem of 2000," Delacruz depicts the millennial journey as a roller-coaster ride to one's chosen destination. From the darkly shaded left portion of the drawing, to suggest the trials and sufferings of its passengers, there is, however, light at the end of the tunnel, which is on the right side, where redemption awaits those who persevere and triumph against the forces of darkness.

In "Motherland," made last year when the nation was beset by a host of never-ending socio-political problems, Delacruz depicts the country's forlorn image, as if rising from a sordid past, the contrasting images of life and death emblazoned on the work.



"CRUCI-FICTION"

Delacruz is equally talented as a writer. As one of those who were lucky to have perused his journals, I was impressed by what I read. They were not juvenile musings, but the quiet reflections of a young man who is observing life passing by. The language is terse but concrete, the tone is undoubtedly satirical, full of wit and irony that is difficult to see even in established writers today.

When I later suggested to Fil Delacruz the possibility of Janos coming up with a book of his son's own prose and illustrations, his face suddenly lit up. So, I said, the drawings are here, most of the initial text is ready, and with Janos' irrepressible spirit, his next big project can become a concrete reality very soon.

But there's no hurrying the young artist's talents to ripen and fully mature. He is young, introspective, and, as they say, he has still the whole world ahead of him. And the journey has just begun.

*E-mail the author at gdormiendo@yahoo.com*

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FAX:____________ PHONE:_______
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*- Zorayda Andam, reigning Bb. Pilipinas - Universe*

## SCHEDULE OF SHOWS

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| DEC. 29 | Sat | 1:00 pm | 4:30 pm | 8:00 pm |
| DEC. 30 | Sun | 1:00 pm | 4:30 pm | 8:00 pm |
| DEC. 31 | Mon | | ( REST DAY) | |
| JAN. 1 | Tue | 1:00 pm | 4:30 pm | 8:00 pm |
| JAN. 2 | Wed | | | 8:00 pm |
| JAN. 3 | Thu | | | 8:00 pm |
| JAN. 4 | Fri | | | 8:00 pm |
| JAN. 5 | Sat | 1:00 pm | 4:30 pm | 8:00 pm |
| JAN. 6 | Sun | 1:00 pm | 4:30 pm | 8:00 pm |

**TICKET PRICES:
P950, 750, 550, 300, 80**

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CALL 911-5555
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For Reservations and Inquiries, please call 911-5555
Getting the best available seats has never been this easy!

# Suggested New Year's Resolutions:

1. Lose excess weight.
2. Exercise regularly.
3. Eat wisely.

# Expected Result: Longer, healthier, happier life.

**Next year should definitely be a healthier one.**

WE'VE made those suggestions with you in mind. What better resolutions to have than those that will give you a happier, healthier life? If you do it for yourself, you also do it for those who love you; your wife, your kids...

Start by losing excess weight. When you are satisfied with the results you'll discover that you'll eat wisely and exercise regularly too. To find out how we can help you lose excess weight, please read on.

### *Lipase Inhibitors: What you need to battle the belly*

You know that obesity is caused by the excessive intake of dietary fat. Now here's the good news, and it's called *lipase inhibitors*. These *lipase inhibitors* block the absorption of dietary fat in the gut, helping weight reduction and reducing the risks from fat- and obesity-associated diseases.

You can even get additional benefits like improvement in blood pressure especially if you are hypertensive, better sugar control if you are diabetic and improved blood cholesterol or lipid levels. *Lipase inhibitors* provide you a healthier chance to effectively fight fat.

It also helps you adopt healthier eating habits.

And since you've already begun losing weight, you will want to maintain that by exercising regularly.

### *Lose That Extra Baggage*

With *lipase inhibitors*, you may experience oily discharge, which can be controlled. This is in fact a good sign that the *lipase inhibitor* works. It means that you are now losing 30% of your fat intake! Consult your doctor now for advice on how to combat obesity the healthy, safe and effective way.

*If you can't keep all your resolutions, with our help, you can keep at least one very important resolution.*

Roche

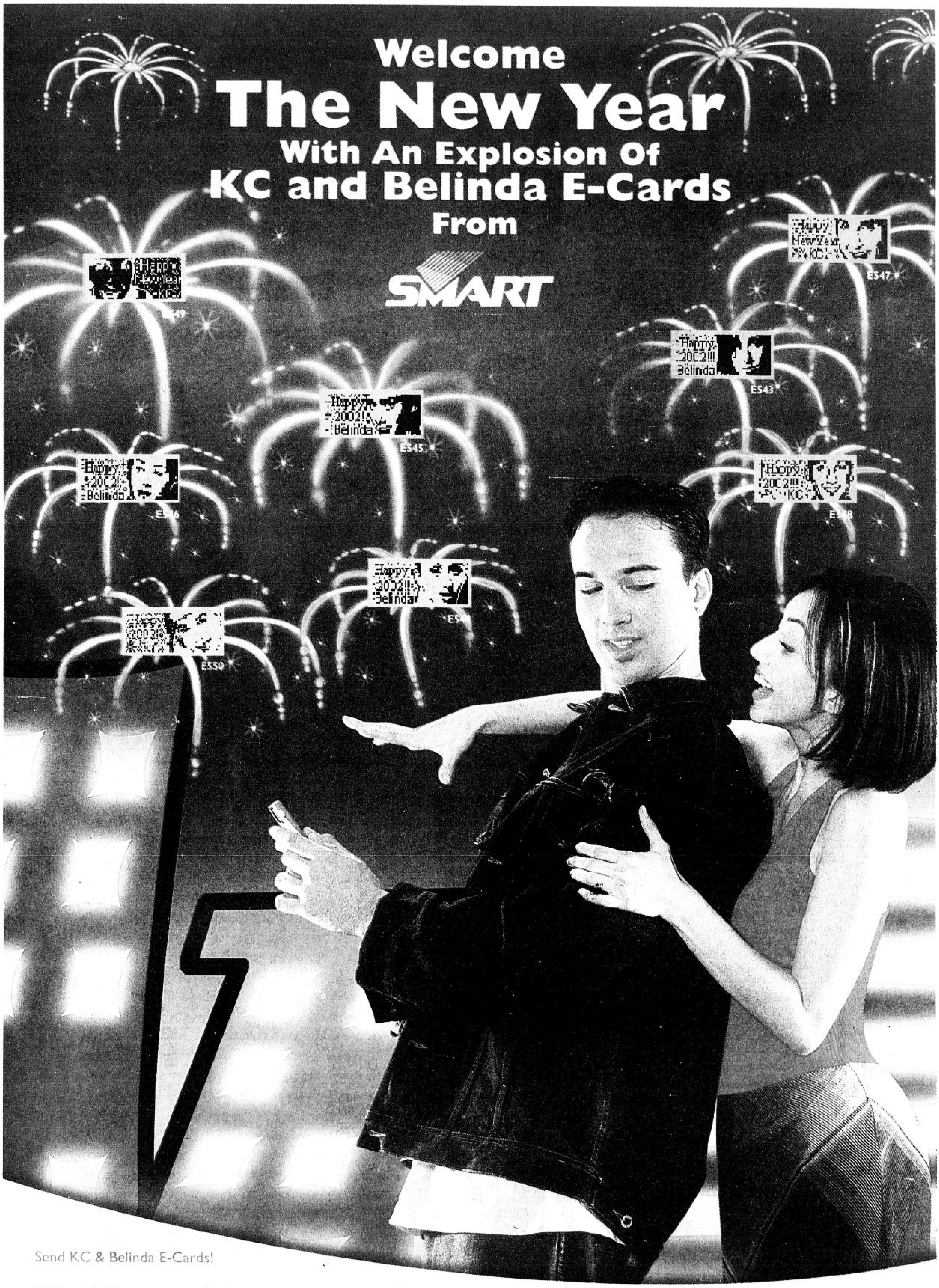
**Obesity Fatline Numbers**

| | |
|---|---|
| 899-5955 | (Metro Manila) |
| 1-800-1888-5955 | (Provincial Areas) |
| (02)890-5012 | (Fax) |

e-mail: roche@bcdpinpoint.com
website: www.managingyourweight.com
address: Roche(Philippines) Inc.,
2252 Don Chino Roces Ave., Makati City

**Fax us!** ☑ ***YES.*** Please send me my free BMI calculator along with instructions on how I can accurately measure my Body Mass Index. Please send to the address below.

Name
Tel. No. (during the day) Mobile Phone No.
Address E-mail Address
Age Height Weight


Happy New Year KC
E549
Happy New Year KC
E547
Happy 2002!!! Belinda
E543
Happy 2002!!! Belinda
E545
Happy 2002!!! Belinda
E546
Happy 2002!!! KC
E548
Happy 2002!!! Belinda
Happy 2002!!!
E550

# Welcome
# The New Year
## With An Explosion Of
## KC and Belinda E-Cards
## From

**SMART**

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| ECARDSEARCH CELEBRITY | ECARDCODES BELINDA | ECARD E543 | SENDECARD E543<br>09182442322 |
| Key in ECARDSEARCH CELEBRITY and send to 240. | Key in ECARDCODES followed by the name of the celebrity and send to 240. | Key in ECARD followed by the code number and send to 240. | Key in SENDECARD followed by the code and celfone number and send to 240. |

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Celebrity Pals standard service rates are P2.50/message sent and P12.00/e-card downloaded or sent.
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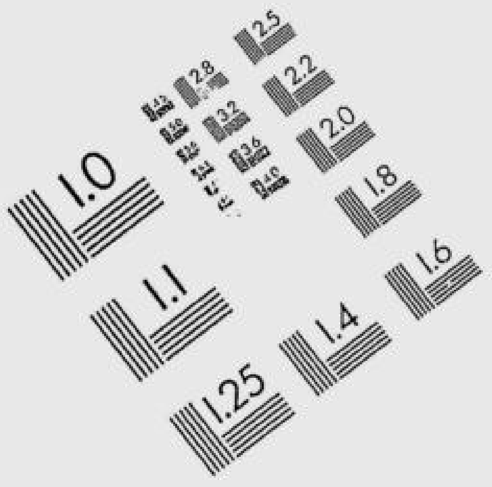
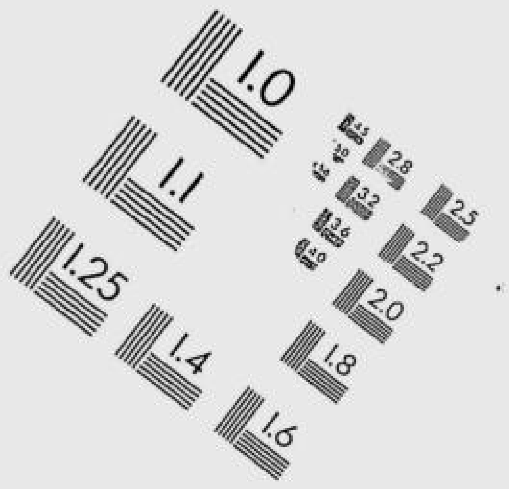
# IMAGE EVALUATION
# TEST TARGET (MT-3)


1.0
1.1
1.25
1.4
1.6
1.8
2.0
2.2
2.5
2.8
3.2
3.6
4.0


1.0
1.1
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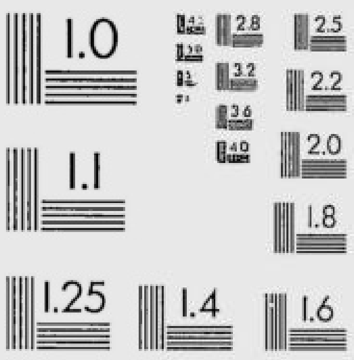
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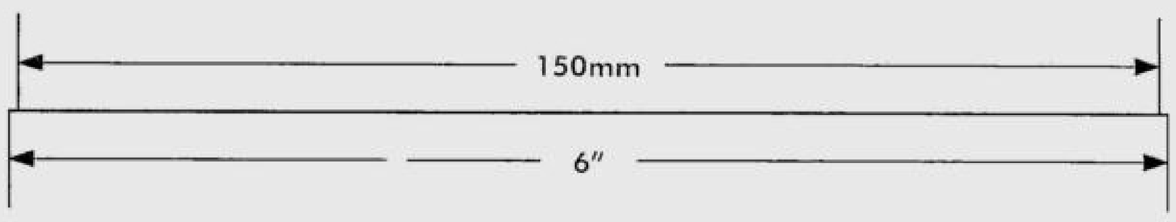

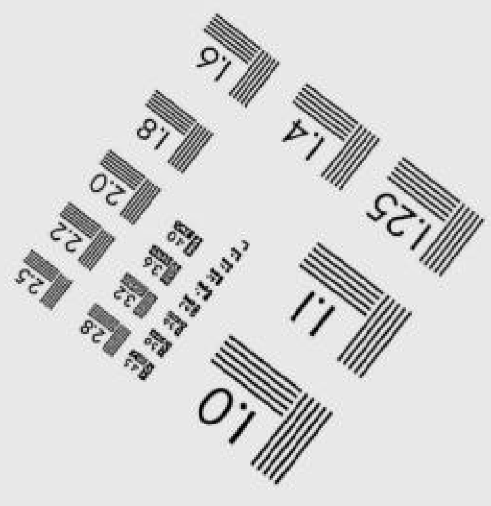
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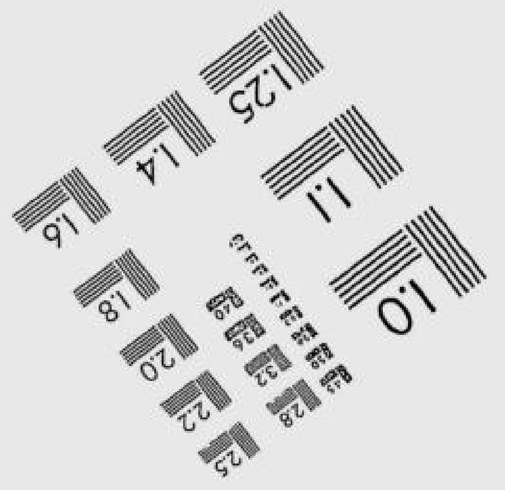
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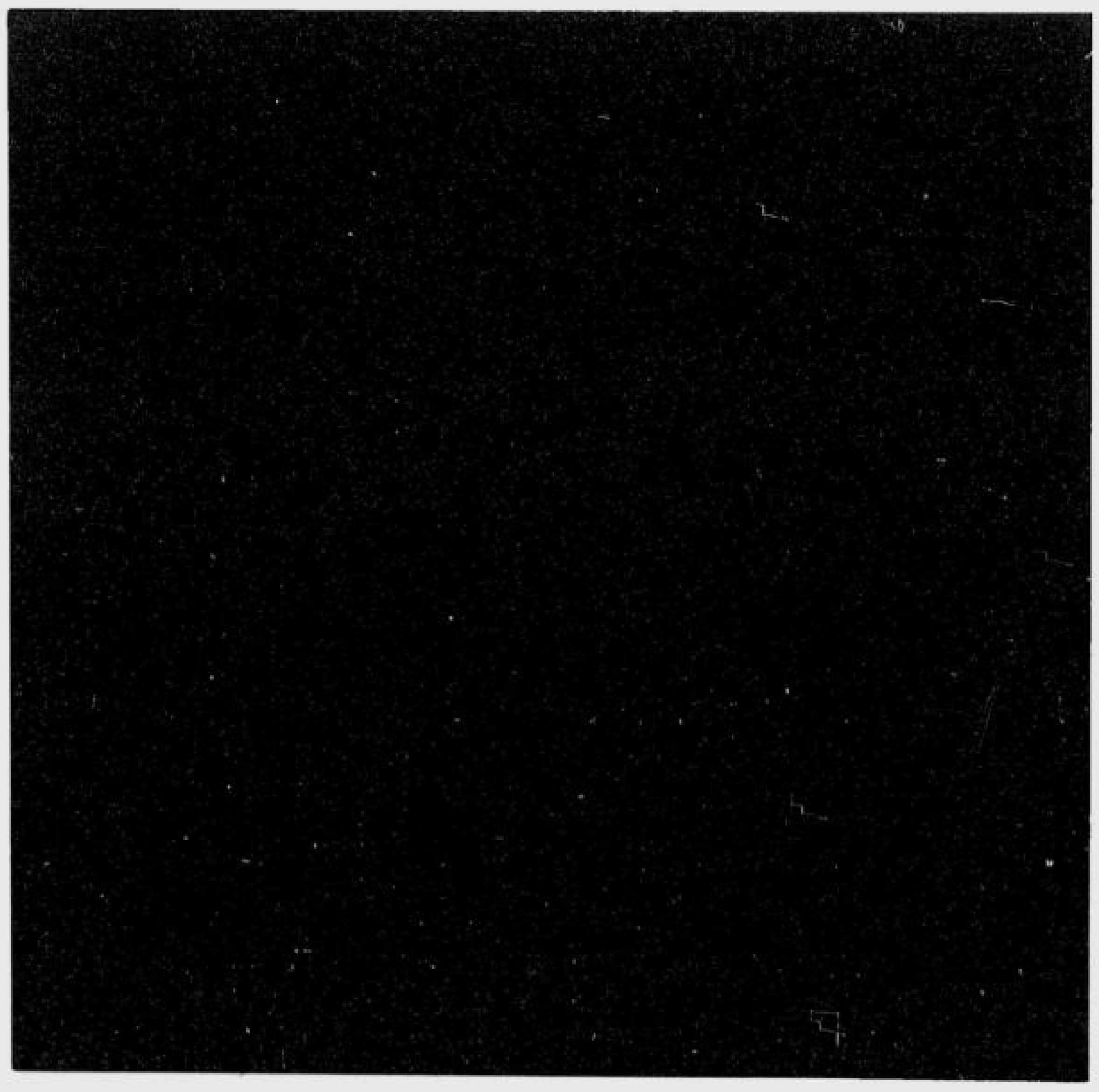

# END

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METRO MANILA, PHILIPPINES

FEBRUARY
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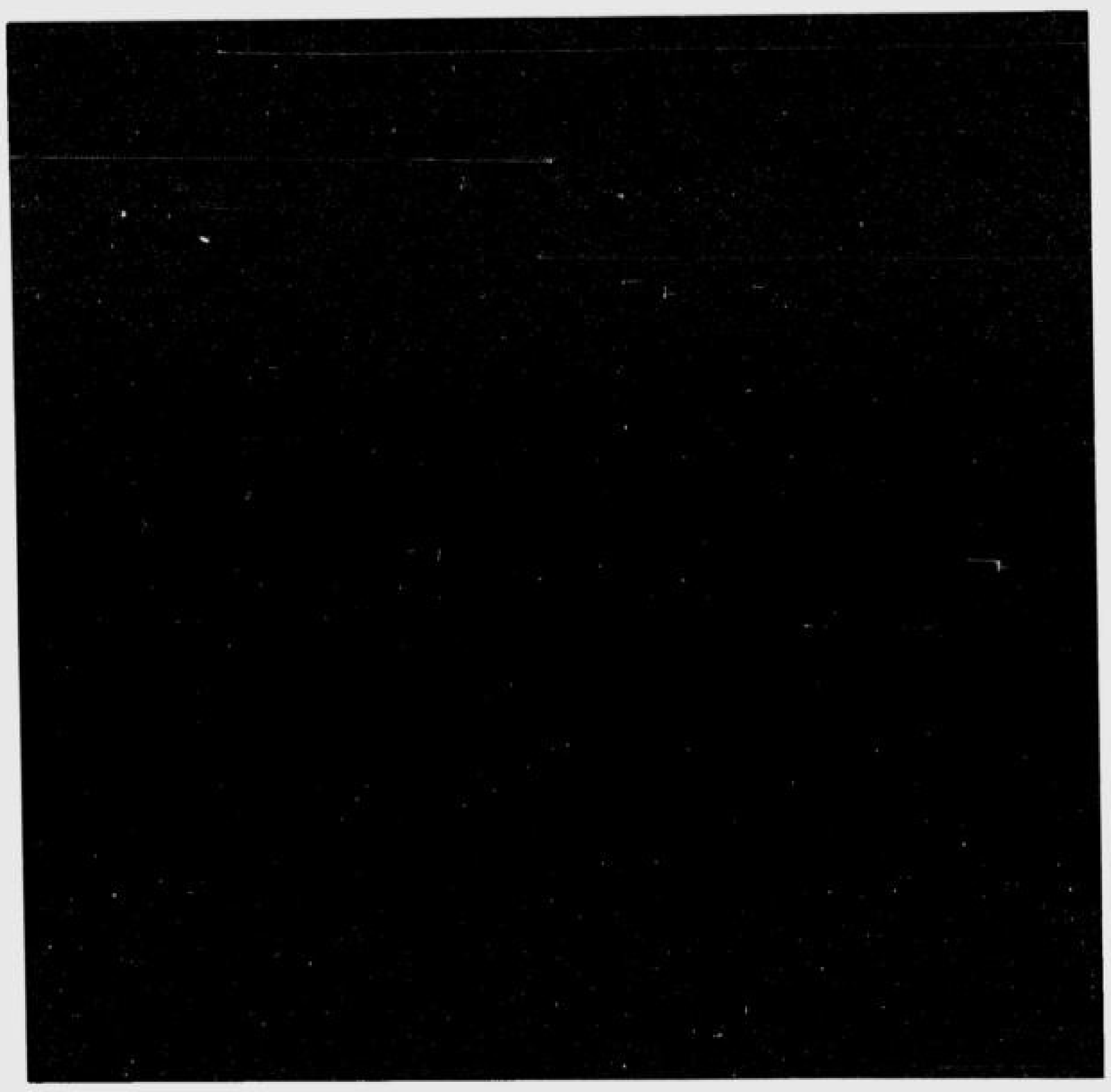
2001

REEL 254



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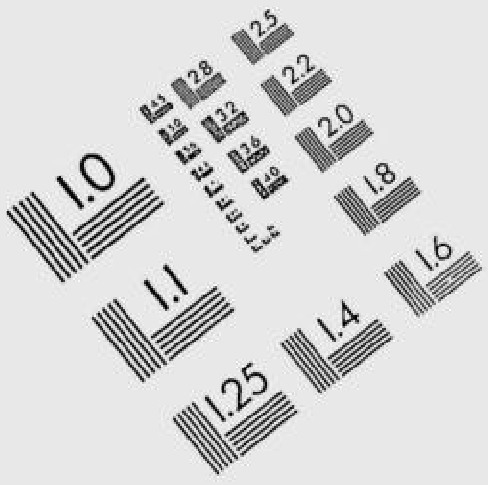
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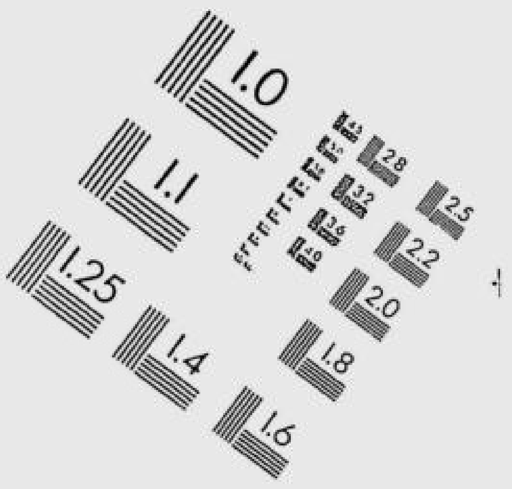
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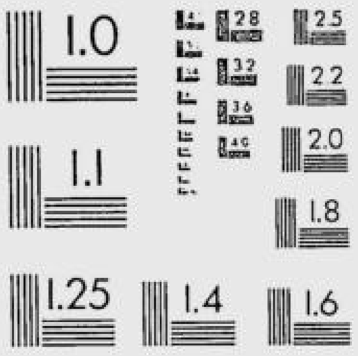
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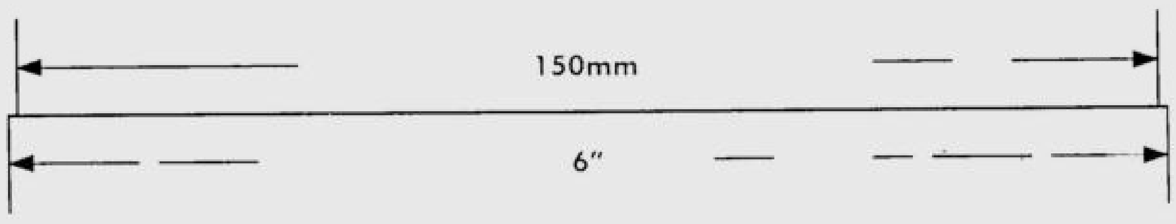

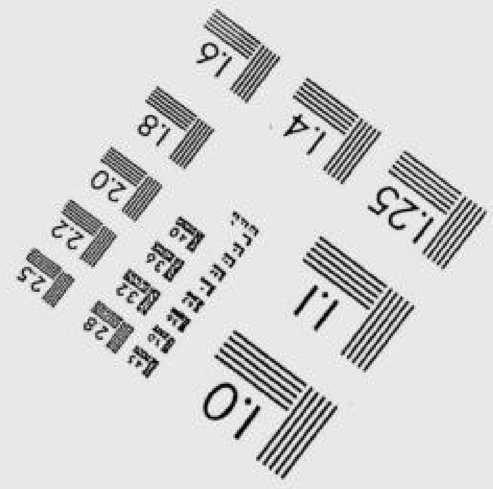
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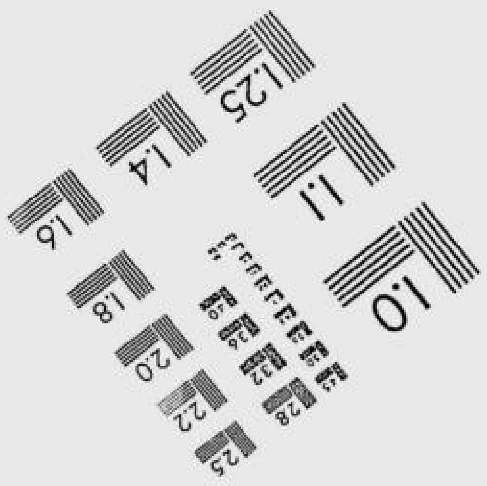
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